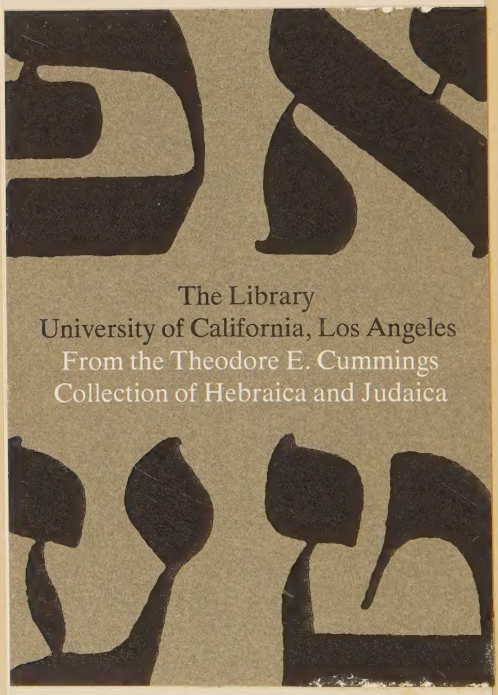

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THE LEWISOHN LECTURES, 1913

LIBERAL JUDAISM AND SOCIAL SERVICE

BY

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Issued Jointly for

The Eastern Council of Reform Rabbis

and the Free Synagogue

NEW YORK

BLOCH PUBLISHING COMPANY

1915

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INTRODUCTION

The theme of these lectures is liberal Judaism in its relation to social service. I shall attempt to treat from a standpoint frankly sectional a subject of universal interest. Jews are a small minority, liberal Jews are a minority of that minority, whilst every sane thinker, whatever be his race or creed, realizes the need for a deeper sense of human fellowship. It is a pressing question for every religionist whether the faith to which he is attached supplies this need. Accordingly the Jew is led to inquire whether Judaism makes him and his co-religionists more serviceable members of the human family. Such an inquiry bristles with difficulties, for it involves not only a knowledge of facts but the power to interpret them. It is hard enough to form a dispassionate estimate of the share taken by the members of our race in the world of labor, of business, of thought, of philanthropy and of public service; but our perplexities are multiplied when we ask ourselves how far their merits and demerits in the pursuit of these activities are caused or conditioned by their Judaism. Perhaps the average Jew ought to be a thorough Jew all the time, but he is certainly nothing of the kind; he is, for better or worse, modified if not transformed by his environment. Further we must bear in mind that there is a distinction to be drawn between the Jewishness of the Jew and his Judaism, that is to say, between his instinctive racial peculiarities and the religious principles which consciously

mould his life. In order to form a just estimate of the value of Judaism as a force that promotes the salvation of society we must study it as it exists in action here and now—in action on the macrocosm, and in action on that microcosm, which is you or I. What is Judaism doing for and with our fellow Jews? What is its influence as a leaven which works within our own hearts? We must not anticipate satisfaction—certainly not self-satisfaction—from truthful answers to such searching questions. Yet it may be that we shall learn not only the present achievements and failures of Judaism but also its potentialities to inspire men and women with faith and zeal in the service of their fellows, so that the crooked may be made straight and the rough places plain.

Thus our inquiry into Judaism as a force that makes for social righteousness involves an examination of the present and a forecast of the future. But the present and future of Judaism are unintelligible without a careful and loving study of its past. Ours is an historical religion, whose soul came to it from afar; it has changed greatly, but it retains its identity. A modern reform temple is a very different place from the Temple of Solomon, but the same Decalogue is the central feature of both. Modern philanthropy and social service rest on fundamental principles, enunciated long ago by the heroes of Bible and Talmud. So also the study of Hebrew institutions, as they existed at various stages of our long history, will show how permanent are the needs of humanity in general and of Israel in particular. The characteristic Jewish nose appears already in the

portrayal of Jehu's servants on an Assyrian monument; our mental and moral peculiarities have probably been just as persistent. To understand the social message of Judaism, we must search the Scriptures and our post-biblical literature, for the books of a people not only register their existing ideals but give birth to new ones.

We shall doubtless find important differences between the present and the past. In modern times, many a line of demarcation between Jew and Christian has been removed in the spiritual as in the material sphere. Books, newspapers and the common school have proved potent solvents of ancient prejudices. Nowadays Jewish and Christian pulpits teach much the same system of social ethics; outworn theological conceptions are repudiated or quietly ignored and modern ideas take their place. Hence it follows that modern Judaism is not drawn exclusively from Jewish sources; we have learned to welcome truth wherever we find it. Not that this open-mindedness is an altogether new thing in Israel; for the Hebrew spirit, as represented by its most influential exponents, has never been an uncompromising foe of Hellenism or of any other system of alien doctrine. But the new thought of today has given Judaism opportunities to develop upon a scale hitherto impossible. We no longer recognize an absolute distinction between inspired and uninspired literature. The Hebrew Scriptures do not exhaust all truth; they are "for guidance, not for dominion over the spirit."[1] Thus the way is opened

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[1]Gustav Gottheil in *Judaism at the World's Parliament of Religions*, p. 30.

for our recognition of revelation, as a process at work yesterday, today and forever. "God is not dumb, that He should speak no more." He speaks through modern sages and poets, as he did of old through Isaiah and the Psalmists. In addition to the old Bible, we reverence the Bible ever new whose inspired authors are the great and good of all races and all ages. Its opening words were written at the dawn of history and it ends with blank pages which are open to receive the messages of teachers yet to be. The social teaching of liberal Judaism is derived not only from Jewish literature but from every book which has added to the sum of saving knowledge or which touches the conscience and inspires us to help our fellow men.

And in another sense we have learned to take a wider view than that which was possible to our fathers. For us, social service means the service of all mankind without distinction of race and creed. Judaism was never destitute of universalist elements. The highest doctrine of our Scriptures included the notion that God is the father of all men, that He cares alike for all His children and that He will lead them at last to walk in His ways.[2] This same sublime teaching appears occasionally in the Talmud and in mediæval Hebrew literature. But it is not surprising that the Jews did not always keep up to this high level either in theory or practice. After all, their treatment at the hands of the Gentiles was not calculated to promote brotherly love. Accordingly they considered it a duty to act with justice and gen-

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[2]See a noble passage in Montefiore's *Bible for Home Reading* Vol. II, pp. 772-773.

erosity towards co-religionists and philo-semitic Gentiles but with bare justice towards others.[3] In ordinary cases, almsgiving to Gentiles was only held to be incumbent, because its absence would have aroused hostility. So also the Messianic hopes of our ancestors included the triumph of hate as well as that of love. In the good time to come, the persecutors of Israel would perish. The wheel would come full circle. Gentile supremacy would end and God's people inherit the earth. The hope for all mankind, that is involved in the Messianic ideas, was never forgotten but it became somewhat obscured; the expectation of a national triumph was a more prominent feature in the consciousness of mediæval Jews. Small blame to them that this was so. But we should be disgraced indeed if the happier conditions of today had not induced a revulsion of feeling towards our brethren of other nations. This beneficial change has certainly taken place and the modern Jew, with all his faults, seldom lacks something of that broad humanitarian sentiment which is the best manifestation of the spirit of the age. Indeed there is a real danger that the Jew, because he is more partial to the stranger, may befriend his brother-Jew less. This should not be. We are not worse universalists, if our efforts for social service are primarily devoted to the cause of

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[3]In David Kimchi's commentary on Psalm 15, there is an instructive note on this subject. He remarks that to lend money without interest is an act of mercy. The Mosaic Law requires us to show this consideration to a fellow-Israelite, but not to a gentile. Yet this discrimination, he continues, must not be exercised in lands where Jews are well treated. There is also some Talmudic authority for the view that the ideal Jew does not exact interest from a non-Jew. (Makkoth 24a.)

our kith and kin. Many of us feel that we can thus find the work which needs us most and which we are best fitted to discharge. Like Moses, when he grew into young manhood, we may well feel the call to go out unto our brethren, to look on their burdens and to relieve them. At the same time, social workers of all creeds recognize more and more that they must join hands as citizens, as lovers of their kind, as children of the all-father. To fight disease, to reduce destitution, to promote education, we need close co-operation between all existing agencies, whatever be their denominational affiliations. We need this co-operation because of its practical utility; we need it also so that we may be inspired to do our duty as co-workers in a common cause. The Jew, who has emerged from the ghetto into the ampler atmosphere of the modern world should not fail to be stirred by this wide appeal. He will not be less responsive to the claims of his own race, because he realizes also the claims of all races. He will understand that the special function of the modern Jew is to show, both by precept and example, that the principles of the old Hebrew prophets are still potent to transfigure the life of the individual and to uplift society. According to the measure of his talents and opportunities, he will serve his generation. He will serve it not only by his work but also by his hopefulness, for as a true exponent of the Hebrew spirit he will be an incurable meliorist. He will hope wisely, nobly, unselfishly: such hopes tend to bring about their own fulfillment.

Such is the part which the Jew should play in the modern world. Of course, no one actually reaches so

high a level of achievement; few even approach it. The idealist, who acts up to his ideals, is the exception in this as in every age. The modern Jew, indeed, is exposed to peculiar dangers. The race for wealth, so characteristic of our day, the greed for pleasure, even the inevitable struggle for existence are foes of idealism. Nor must we minimize the perils that have accompanied Jewish emancipation and the break up of orthodoxy. In too many cases the result has been spiritual bankruptcy and the multiplication of Jewish materialists—the worst of all materialists as they have been called—self-centered, self-complaisant, self-indulgent. Yet there is nc occasion for despair. Judaism lives, as it has always lived, in its idealists, who are as genuine now as ever they were. Idealism sometimes deceives itself in part; indeed the simultaneous fulfilment of all ideals is inconceivable, because they are so divergent. But the search after God and the good never goes unrewarded; some new aspect of truth always emerges. The Jewish socialist may repudiate the God of Israel and the very name of Judaism, but he shows himself true to the principles of our ancient prophets, when he denounces social injustice. His separate proposals for the reconstruction of society may be impossible, but his dream of a better ordered world will one day be realized. Zionist schemes for the rejuvenation of the Hebrew nation may or may not be sound; but the deeper sense of Jewish solidarity which has already resulted from the movement cannot but do good. We might concede that liberal Judaism was as unjewish (whatever be the meaning of that question-begging epithet) as the most bitter of its opponents

allege; but abiding blessing must result from a movement, which represents an earnest and self-sacrificing effort to reinterpret Judaism in terms of the modern spirit, so that we may have a heightened God-consciousness and be inspired to lead lives of vigorous and joyous service.

Service—that is the *Leitmotiv* of the idealisms, which are dominant in modern times. I have named three forms of idealism—socialism, Zionism and liberal Judaism—that now affect different sections of the Jewish race. The humanitarian impulse is strong in all of them, even in Zionism, which appeals primarily to racial feeling but derives much of its strength from the desire of many Jews, who are themselves free from molestation, to secure a haven of rest and security for their oppressed brethren. As for liberal Judaism, its most urgent duty, as I shall try to show, is to preach that religion in action finds its highest expression in the service of man. In this respect at least, it will, if true to itself, be true also to the genuine traditions of the Hebrew race.

LIBERAL JUDAISM AND SOCIAL SERVICE

I

THE NEW COVENANT

The Jewish prayer-book for the Day of Atonement contains a beautiful passage about the contrast between mortal man and eternal God. "Man comes from the dust and returns thither. He gets his bread at the peril of his life. He is like the brittle bowl, the fading grass, the withering flower, the passing shadow, the melting cloud, the fluttering wind, the fleeting dream. But Thou, O God, art eternal; Thou art King everlasting." Triumphant is this thought of an enduring purpose, which remains constant in a world of flux and flow. The great affirmation is to affirm the eternities. If the belief in a personal God disappeared, the moral world would still abide, although human endeavor would lose some of its elasticity and joyousness. But suppose our modern immoralists persuaded us that virtue was a matter of fashion or personal taste and that the concept of eternal righteousness was an idle dream. Then indeed the light of the world would be eclipsed and man would walk in darkness. In the physical world, we cannot set things going without a fixed point of support. So is it in the moral world, but there the evidence of the senses fails us and we can but rely upon our spiritual experiences, through which the triumphs of faith are verified. Thus does the clinging soul learn to rely upon the everlasting arms which uphold it.

But now comes the tragedy. The subject matter of faith relates to the eternities, but forms of faith are local and temporary. Religion is one, but religions, past and present are innumerable. And each particular system of religion is itself changing, like all other embodiments of human thought. As a rule, religious development proceeds slowly and only manifests itself in slight alterations of doctrine or ritual. But now and then there is a "day of the Lord" (to use a favorite phrase of the prophets) when men discover that their former outlook upon life and thought has been transformed, so that the old expressions of belief appear false or irrelevant. Away, cry some eager spirits, with this faith of yesterday, that has become the superstition of today! But men will not lightly abandon their faith of yesterday. They love it as their ancestral heritage; it is to many of them a source of comfort and a bulwark of virtue. Thus religious and thoughtful persons, who live at such an epoch, feel that they stand at a parting of the ways. Shall they attempt to mediate between the conflicting claims of old and new, or is it necessary to choose the one and to reject the other? Such is the position, in which liberal religionists, both Jews and Christians, stand today. They have to consider whether belief in the old historical religions is compatible with modern thought. Is the liberal Christian truly a Christian, and the liberal Jew truly a Jew? Do we want a new religion or shall we advance along the old paths, which our fathers trod? Let us consider some aspects of this problem in its relation to our own people.

Now no single solution of our spiritual perplexities

will receive universal assent. A man's religion should sum up his most intimate convictions; dearest friend and most revered adviser cannot define it for him. The late Charles Voysey of the Theistic Church wrote a book upon "Religion for All Men," but such a phrase is partly misleading, for our deepest knowledge depends not only upon the ultimate reality of the thing known but also upon our faculty to know it. Your religion and mine, O my brother, would not have been quite the same, although we had lived in the so-called age of faith, when men and women were expected to take everything for granted. Still less shall we be in absolute agreement in this restless twentieth century, when the doubting spirit is abroad and authority is no longer permitted by free men and women to be the despot of their inner life. Yet an interchange of spiritual experiences between man and man is always helpful; still more so between Jew and Jew. Ultra-orthodox Jews and ultra-liberals often feel the same religious difficulties and may learn from one another. Perhaps therefore some thoughts about the social and ethical aspects of our faith, which have relieved the perplexities of the present speaker, may help others to feel that what we need is not a new religion but rather Judaism made new.

My plea is for a view of Judaism, in which the old and the new are harmoniously blended. Some may perhaps suggest that such a conception is an unsatisfactory compromise, invented by modern latitudinarians, who are halting between two opinions. Not so. At every stage in its history, Judaism would have languished in the absence of new thought and new ideals. The

prophets above all were eager reformers of contemporary orthodox religion, as modern Biblical scholars have clearly demonstrated. I feel indeed that I can best treat this part of my subject by quoting and explaining Jeremiah's grand utterance concerning the new revelation which he felt to be imminent. Although he had in mind the religious needs of his own age, he spoke with such spiritual insight, that his words express or imply an ever living message for the guidance of distant generations. The passage runs as follows:

"Behold the days come, saith Yahweh, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. * * * I will put My law in their inward parts and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God and they shall be My people; and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know Yahweh: for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith Yahweh." * * * (Jer. Ch. 31, vv. 31, 33, 34).

This passage is, of course, celebrated through its prominence in the history of Christianity. Jeremiah's "new covenant" has given rise to the familiar "new testament" by a verbal substitution due to the Septuagint, which preferred to render the Hebrew *b'rith* as a testament i. e. a grant, given by God's free grace, rather than as a compact between two parties, conceived as co-equals. The Christian church, after some preliminary hesitation, decided that the "new testament" had superseded its predecessor for "that which is becoming old and waxeth aged is nigh unto vanishing away" (Hebrews 8:13). But Jeremiah certainly intended to suggest no

such antithesis as that which is drawn by Christians between law and gospel. The new covenant, of which he had a vision, was to have the same content as the old one. He warned his people to walk in the good old paths, wherein they would find rest for their souls.[1] But this rest could not, in his judgment, be obtained by ceremonial observances. The pre-exilic prophets were all indifferent or hostile to ritual, but Jeremiah more so than the others, for he denied the efficacy and divine origin of the whole sacrificial system, and doubtless considered that the ordinances extant upon this subject were among the forgeries which had been fabricated by the lying pen of the scribes.[2] The duty of Israel was not to be discharged by punctiliousness in ritual but by the knowledge of God. The mark of the new age would be that all men, small and great, should possess this knowledge.

How then did Jeremiah suppose that man can know God?

The prophet answers this question for us in the description which he gives of the good king Josiah. The latter ate and drank (i. e. he enjoyed the good things of this world), but he also "did judgment and justice. Then it was well with him. He vindicated the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well. Was not this

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[1] Jer. 6:16.

[2] Jer. 7:21-22; 8:8. In Jer. 33:18, the restoration of sacrifices is predicted as a feature of the good time to come. This passage must be from another hand. The authenticity of Jer. 17:19-27, in which great stress is laid upon the observance of the Sabbath, has also been questioned, but with less apparent reason.

to know me? saith Yahweh." (Jer. 22:15-16). The pursuit of social righteousness, the prophet would say, leads man to know God.[3] In our days, the opponents of liberal religion are accustomed to decry it as "mere" morality, which neglects the contemplative and institutional sides of religion. This criticism may be partly justified, for it is difficult to emphasize one aspect of truth without underestimating others. But if it be a fault to identify the knowledge of God with zeal for righteousness, it is a fault on the right side and one to which Jeremiah would have pleaded guilty with an easy conscience. Let no man, the prophet tells us, glory in his wisdom, his physical strength or his riches, but only in his knowledge of God as the author of loving kindness, judgment and righteousness.[4]

Thus the old and the new covenants, according to Jeremiah, both provided that Yahweh would be Israel's God and would protect them, provided that their life was virtuous and therefore godlike. In what way then did the new covenant differ from the old one? According to the Jewish commentator, David Kimchi, the old covenant was forcibly imposed upon the Israelites and was violated by them, whereas the new one would be written on their hearts, ever remembered and ever cherished. This view of the prophet's meaning appears to be essentially correct, although it needs some expansion. When the new covenant between God and his people

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[3]There is a similar thought in Hosea 4:1, where the prophet appears to identify the knowledge of God with truth (i. e., trustworthiness) and the love of our fellow men.

[4]Jer. 9:23.

has been ratified, the law divine will be written in the human heart, that is to say it will become part of every man's nature—"a principle operative from within." (Driver). Thus understood, Jeremiah's doctrine of the new covenant is of great practical importance. Not only does it throw light upon the moral development of the human race, but it shows us how to train our own will so that we may be enabled to live the good life. The one thing necessary for the future of Judaism is that we should all become not merely "children of the covenant" made in the flesh, but "children of the *new* covenant," which is ratified by the heart.

What was the old covenant, the supersession of which Jeremiah hoped to see? It was a covenant that rested on fear. It threatened offenders against the law with this penalty or that at the hands of God or man. Such appeals to force and to the fear of force are, of course, necessary for the stability of society. Some men would disregard the very elements of decent conduct, unless they feared the consequences of doing so. They do not steal, lest they be sent to prison; they carry out their contracts, lest they be mulcted in damages; they obey the behests of public opinion, lest they suffer social ostracism. What is our judgment of such persons? Our first thought about them is that such virtue as they possess is extremely insecure. At any moment they may commit a convenient act of wrong-doing, if they think that they can escape the watchful eye of their fellowmen. Nor is the fear of divine retribution a more effective restraint. On the contrary, the effect is so remote from the cause, that most men will hardly realize

it "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." (Eccl. 8: 11.) And there is a deeper reason why fear is a very imperfect aid to virtue. As a rule, the dread of punishment is a restraining but not a propulsive force; it seldom produces an act of positive goodness and certainly is incapable of forming the higher types of character. Besides, the man who does right through fear, makes such show of virtue as he possesses contemptible. We feel instinctively that his prudential morality is no morality at all; if he only dared he would commit sins of unspeakable vileness. Now there is a mean devil in all of us, that must be tamed at times by the rod of terror, but the higher side of our nature has to be developed by quite other means.

Yet the reign of fear has been an indispensable stage in human development. Untaught man flees from the physical dangers which he knows not how to conquer; otherwise his life would be forfeit. Only at a later stage of his history does he learn to face peril and to overcome it. So also does fear promote morality in primitive man, who is restrained from the commission of anti-social actions, lest he incur the wrath of his gods and his tribe. Nor can fear be regarded as an emotion, necessary to the savage and the would-be criminal, but lying outside our own personal experience. "Fears and hopes accustom man to right conduct and thus form the basis of social habit which is the actual foundation of all conduct in any case, and the necessary prerequisite for sound reflection upon conduct and the attainment of

any higher sense of morality."[5] The acts which we fear to do we cease to do and the desire to perform them ceases in consequence. By degrees, the undesired action becomes an action which we condemn. Thus our moral sense emerges. We no longer need external compulsion, for our conscience exercises upon us a more effective restraint. Instead of doing right because we fear to do wrong, we do right because we feel that we ought to do right. Fear is replaced by reverence. We become afraid not of divine punishment but of God Himself, who speaks within our heart; we learn to feel awe of what God is, rather than fear of what he might do. The new covenant is coming into being.

So far so good, but more is required of us. If we do right from a mere sense of duty, it cannot be said that as yet the law of God has been written in our hearts. The conception of duty almost implies that of reluctance. When we perform a spontaneous act of virtue, the idea that we ought to do it hardly shapes itself within our minds: there is no divided self pulled this way or that, until the stern voice of duty issues its edict, which we dare not disobey. The perfect life of man is that in which he does right because he wants to do right. Not fear, not even reverence, but love has become the law of his being. He loves God with all his might and his neighbor as himself. "He does God's will in love and rejoices in chastisement."[6] His desire for righteousness is vital, persistent, passionate; "he bears all things, be-

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[5]See Schiller, *Humanism,* p. 255.

[6]Yoma 23a.

lieves all things, hopes all things, endures all things."[7] Such is the ideal man, who has risen to the height of his destiny. It is certain that none of us will attain to such perfection, but we are poor creatures, unless we struggle towards it. Nor will our efforts go unrewarded. Every virtuous deed accomplished will make virtue easier, so that in our best moments we shall be tuned into harmony with the divine will. Thus through us and through millions like us, will Jeremiah's dream of the "new covenant" become a reality.

Another point should be noted. Under the new covenant. God's law is to be written in the heart. Now the heart (as the Talmud already remarks)[8] was considered by the ancient Israelites to be the seat of the intellect: the word *leb* (heart) in Hebrew is often equivalent to "brain" in English. The law in the heart is therefore a law, approved by the intellect; it is the product of independent thought. The law in my heart or in yours is far from being the whole of God's law, but just so much of it as each of us can master. Thus my religion and yours can never be exactly the same, although they may resemble each other so closely, that we can worship together and unite in the same confession of faith. But minds, like faces, are never duplicated; if we think at all about religion, each of us will follow his own line of thought. Commonplace creatures though we are, we must not suppose that our reflections and heart-stirrings are empty and futile. True religion

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[7] 1 Corinthians 13:7.
[8] Berachoth 61a.

is always in the making and we shall play a part, however small, in this great process, if our spirit is attentive to the divine promptings. It is a rare moment when a great teacher arises with his new revelation about God and goodness. But he does not come to the world as an isolated phenomenon. His message might never have formed itself within his consciousness, had it not harmonized with the thought of his age; he would not inspire his hearers with his own fervor unless he gave utterance to thoughts that were already struggling for expression within their hearts. The prophetic leader needs a prophetic people; the new covenant must be ratified by the rank and file in the army of the Lord.

Let us now consider another difference between the old and the new covenants. As has been often pointed out, Jeremiah was the founder of personal religion, for, unlike the older prophets, he does not address himself to Israel, as an organic totality, but to the Israelite. "In place of the general body of the people which had hitherto constituted the subject of religion, the individual now comes forward with his claim to the most direct personal communion with his God. * * * The "new covenant" can blossom and bear fruit wherever an Israelite looks up to his God with a grateful and trustful heart."[9]

This was an immense service to spiritual progress, for it enabled the religion of Israel to survive the ruin of the Hebrew State. Jeremiah witnessed the break up of the theocracy, which was never afterwards to be re-estab-

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[9]Hastings, *Dictionary of the Bible,"* Vol. 5, p. 697 (Kautzsch).

lished except during the brief period of Maccabean ascendancy. Henceforward the ideal of national righteousness became to Israel a far-off dream, that could only be realized when Messiah should come. But the prophet's faith was unshaken. He proclaimed that Jahweh would be revealed to every pious Israelite through his own spiritual experience; thus every devout and loving soul would know its God.

Rauschenbusch in his fine book on "Christianity and the Social Crisis" has shown that Jeremiah's achievement involved some loss. A religion, which is purely individualistic, is one-sided. The true scope of religion includes all kinds of human activity, whether exercised by the individual or by society as a whole. No spiritual faith is complete, which loses touch with the social ideal. This truth, so nobly taught in the nineteenth century by such men as Kingsley and Ruskin, is realized by our finer and bolder spiritual leaders of today, who "carry the religious spirit freely into the discussion of public questions. * * * It was the evidence of religious genius when Jeremiah carried religion out of national life into the experiences of the suffering individual soul. Today it is evidence of spontaneous religious power if a man can carry religion from private experience into national life."[10] Thus Rauschenbusch calls upon the Christian church to awaken the social conscience. The synagogue should not be backward in the performance of the same high duty. Judaism has indeed never lost sight of the social aspects of religion. In our liturgy, the worshipper identifies himself habitually with the con-

[10]Rauschenbusch, op. cit. p. 364. See also pp. 27-32.

gregation of Israel; this sense of solidarity inspired the lives of our fathers, as well as their prayers, during the long night of persecution. It was a current saying that all Jews are mutually responsible for one another.[11] In every centre of Jewish population, the ecclesiastical heads of the community made provision for the relief of suffering, for the education of poor children and for the prevention of injustice and oppression in the business life of their co-religionists. In short, the life of a Jew, as a social unit, was fully controlled by the synagogue, until the time of his civil emancipation. This state of things has now ended. The Jew, as a subject of the modern State, is set free from ecclesiastical control, and the most intimate relations of his life are regulated by the secular authorities. If he resides in a democratic country, the sphere of his duties has been changed still further. In such a case, it is not enough for him to obey the law as a passive subject, he is expected to prove himself an active citizen, who tries to form a correct judgment of public affairs, so that he may raise his voice or at least cast his vote in favor of good measures and good men. Jewish ecclesiastical leaders no longer put forward any pretension to exercise direct authority in secular matters. Yet the development of the synagogue, if its function be rightly understood, may well be similar to that of the English throne, which has lost its coercive power but acquired an increased influence. Judaism must teach, as of old, that all civil authority shall be exercised on religious principles and that the

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[11] Shebuoth 39a.

members of the chosen race are in honor bound to be foremost amongst the champions of political and social Justice. Jeremiah's conception of the tender personal relation developed between the individual worshipper and his God must supplement but not supplant the grand thought of many another teacher in Israel that a sound national life can only be based upon the eternal principles of righteousness.

* * * * *

Jeremiah's theology, like that of all the Hebrew prophets, is very simple. He teaches that Yahweh is the creator of earth and sky, the ruler of the nations, the hope of Israel; above all, that He is a perfect moral Being, the God of justice and mercy. And the prophet would have us realize that we should strive to make these ethical attributes our own; to know God we must walk in His ways. To repeat my former quotation from Jeremiah's tribute to the good King: "He vindicated the cause of the poor and needy * * * Was not this to know Me?" In other words, the service of man leads to the knowledge of God.

Now there are many varieties of experience which bring the idea of God into the human consciousness. What God is we cannot tell; we must be content to know what He is to us. This assurance comes to us, above all, in moments of "perfect disenthralment"[12] from our selfish preoccupations, when we lose ourselves in the thought of all that is divine in the world around us. The knowledge of God comes to different men in different ways. Sometimes he reveals Himself to us through our

[12]"That perfect disenthralment which is God."—*Lowell.*

consciousness of the beauty and the wonder of Nature. The student may become aware of God through his reading, the philosopher through his speculations. To others, God speaks through poetry, through music, through pictures. The sense of the Divine comes to many a devout soul in answer to prayer. "The Shechinah rests on man at times of duteous joy,"[13] declares the Talmud and it is well said. But sorrow also, when rightly used, purifies men and brings them nearer to God. The very torments of doubt that make us cry "O that I knew where I might find Him" are often the birth-pangs of a faith more vital than the old. "God," it has been beautifully said, "is everywhere. The laughter of children, the beauty of women and trees and hills, the affections of home; our own high purposes, the honesty, courage, heroism of our fellows—a thousand daily experiences reveal him."[14] But above all, through love for men our brothers we begin to realize the bonds of love that unite us with our Father in Heaven and thus gain such knowledge of God, as is possible to man.

But let us not trust overmuch to fine phrases. To love mankind in the abstract may mean little or nothing. Vital knowledge of God depends upon our love for the living creatures of flesh and blood, whom we know and can serve. Such love must be first shown to our own nearest and dearest. We are not to imitate the lady with an invalid mother, who went out as a hospital nurse, because there was nothing to be done at home.

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[13]Shabbath 30b.

[14]R. L. Bremner, *The Modern Pilgrimage from Theology to Religion*, p. 29.

Yet there are other spheres of love besides the home. We must beware, as Wordsworth tells us, of selfishness

"Disguised in gentle names
Of peace and quiet and domestic love."

"Many a man, in his affection and service to his family, forgets that he belongs also to the collective being; that he cannot without guilt sever himself from the needs of his parish, of his nation, of his race, of the poor, of the miserable, of the oppressed." (Farrar.) It is true that we cannot love all men equally. On the other hand, affection, like all moral qualities, is acquired by practising it; to be loving, we must love. By showing kindness to all about us we shall grow in warmth of heart and in breadth of sympathy, until love becomes the supreme law of our being. So shall we be guided towards the knowledge of God. The loving agnostic has a better idea of the divine nature than has the unloving religionist. "We become united to God not by mystical absorption but by partaking, whether consciously or unconsciously, of that truth and justice and love which He Himself is." (Jowett.) The world's greatest need is a living faith in goodness, through which the Source of all righteousness will be revealed to the hearts of men.

Shakespeare has said of mercy that it blesses him that gives and him that takes. This thought may be applied to all forms of social service that are carried out in the right spirit. Those who perform kindly deeds not only bring joy into the lives of others but also gain true happiness and peace of mind, such as the self-indulgent can never experience. And many another spir-

itual grace is added to them. For example, social service is often the means of bringing Jewish indifferentists back to Judaism. It is sometimes argued that a man who has not joined a Jewish congregation has forfeited the right to be considered a Jew. This is a hard saying and untrue. Much splendid service is rendered to Jewish social and charitable institutions by men and women who have become estranged from the synagogue. They have ceased to worship the God of Israel, but they still feel the racial consciousness, which impels them to serve their fellow-Jews. Sometimes this feeling is the result of a moribund Judaism, which bids fair to pass away in the next generation. In many cases, however, it has a redemptive force; those, who have been active in the charitable work of the community, often return to the synagogue afterwards. Their sense of brotherly duty has brought them home at last.

We rejoice therefore in the sense of obligation that binds Jew to Jew through fellowship of race, as we rejoice in the wider brotherhood that binds man to man. But we must not allow ourselves to be misled by the spurious liberalism which asserts that everything depends on deed and nothing upon belief. A man's creed—the formulary of belief which he accepts from his pastors and masters—may indeed have little enough to do with his true self, but a vital faith in God, if he is privileged to possess it, has a determining influence upon all that he does and is. Consider particularly the case of the social worker, who aims to help the careless, sluggish, ignorant or impure to make a better use of life. If he is a believer in God, he has a mighty weapon at

his command. It is true that the success of his efforts will not depend upon his moral admonitions, which are only exceptional, but upon his personality, which will be constantly felt. He will spend himself to give relief, education, amusement or simple friendship to the neglected and he will thus show them the loveliness of the good life. Yet occasions for a direct moral appeal cannot be entirely absent and fortunate is the social worker who is conscious of a message to be spoken in the name of the God of righteousness. In our efforts to strengthen the weak against temptation and to make them feel that virtue is worth a struggle, more can be achieved by religious faith, which depends upon the love for a Person, than by ethical faith, which ultimately requires us to love an abstraction. Some thoughtful agnostics themselves regret that they cannot with sincerity appeal to the sanctions of religion as an aid to social work. I have heard it said, from this standpoint, that the weak and ignorant still need God to keep them straight, although educated men and women can be virtuous without personifying the principle of virtue. But such a view is superficial. Religion benefits not only those who are weak but those who think themselves strong; it is needed by the reformer as well as by those whom he wishes to reform. Sooner or later, we are apt to become disappointed with social work, unless the sense of God's presence in humanity saves us from fainting by the way. A purely secular outlook on life appears unsatisfying in the long run. This fact is illustrated by a touching passage in the Autobiography of John Stuart Mill, assuredly one of the noblest rationalists who have

ever lived. He once asked himself whether, supposing all the reforms he desired were attained that day, he would be satisfied or happy and found himself compelled to admit that he would not be. The history of reform is the history of disappointment. Again and again has the reformer in religion, politics or education set out to make all things new, but the result, however salutary, seldom or never comes up to his original expectation. The Messiah is always coming, but he never comes. Utopia has often been born, but straightway it dies. We survey the larger stretches of time and behold "morning cometh but also night." There has been immense material and moral progress amongst the higher races of mankind, but crime, degradation and destitution arising in the very bosom of our civilization, still present problems, which seem insoluble and are certainly unsolved. And so we are assailed by doubts as to the reality of progress. May it not be, we sometimes ask ourselves, that humanity, like the population of Anatole France's "Penguin Island" will double back upon its traces and revert to barbarism through the operation of some unknown law. How shall we release ourselves from all such perplexities about ourselves, our fellowmen and the future of the world? Whence shall our help come? The only satisfying answer is that of the Psalmist: Our help is from the Lord, who maketh heaven and earth—from the Lord, whose purpose may be delayed, but come it will, for a thousand years in His sight are but as yesterday.

How fair is our portion and how goodly our heritage, if this faith be ours! It is for us to show that our

trust in God is a vital force, which makes us labor zealously for the good of others. So shall we render true service to man and through that service we shall grasp the meaning of life and the knowledge of God.

II

SOME BIBLICAL CONCEPTS OF SOCIAL DUTY

We used to be taught that the Bible is God's book and that in it He speaks to man. This is a childlike representation, which appears inadequate to the modern mind, yet it suggests more than one important truth. It may well be said that God speaks to us not only through the Bible but through every national literature, which shows us how a people was inspired to fulfil its destiny for its own benefit and ultimately for that of mankind. I apply this statement not only to such nations as Greece and Rome, whose "words have gone out to the end of the world" and whose services to mankind are universally recognized, but even to the detested military despotisms of antiquity. The records of Assyria's military prowess, of Babylon's commercial expansion and of the wisdom of the Egyptians all prove that these master nations achieved in their time something of substance towards the development of civilization. Ruthless and cruel they were; yet they were the first to teach mankind how to organize for a common cause, how to bring order out of chaos and how to establish the supremacy of law. Whilst each of these nations flourished it was a chosen people; the ancient inscriptions of its kings have this much in common with the Bible, that they reveal God, as He fulfils Himself in history. We may say further that the world's best literature, ancient and modern, is in some measure sacred to us, because it

gives a picture of humanity struggling upwards towards the light and of God, who does not leave Himself without a witness in the hearts and lives of man. The more parallels to the great sayings of the Bible that scholars can discover amongst other nations far and wide, the better we are pleased.

But if there are many Bibles, our Bible is for us the Bible of Bibles. Considering it historically, we recognize that the lofty ethical teaching therein contained has guided the most progressive nations of the world into the path of righteousness. Nor has its natural force abated, although we now realize that it includes imperfect and temporary teachings besides those of lasting inspiration. The Bible is as precious to us as ever, for many of its words have a unique power to touch our hearts and to uplift us into converse with heaven. We are confident that it is inspired, because it inspires us. As we study the Bible, we seem to hear the voice of God speaking, as He did on Sinai according to Jewish legend, to the souls of all the generations.

The interest of our Scriptures is many-sided and every man can derive from them a message, appropriate to his own needs. Judaism also, the religious system based on the Bible, has been all things to all men. To some it has meant observance, to others study, to others again mystical contemplation. None of these aspects of Judaism is destitute of enduring value; they all correspond to human needs, which call for satisfaction. But any religion, worthy of the name, must be beyond everything else a source of moral inspiration; it must quicken within us a sense of duty towards our higher self, towards the

members of our family and towards the rest of mankind. Such is the religion of the Bible, which surrounds ethical concepts with a warm emotional atmosphere. Time has modified most of the methods, by means of which these teachings are to be applied to human conduct, but they still embody in substance the principles of a good life. This is notably the case with those ethical concepts of the Bible, which relate to social righteousness. The progress of the world has depended and will continue to depend upon the extent to which these great thoughts are put into practice. Let us try therefore to discover some of the leading doctrines of social obligation in the Bible; if we read aright the wisdom of the ages, it will help us to unravel our own moral perplexities.

There are two possible methods in which to approach our subject. We might collect an anthology of Biblical texts, selecting from the Law and the Prophets, from the Psalms and the Wisdom Literature a number of utterances, full of moral fervor and spiritual insight. Such passages are a Bible within the Bible; they have called many to righteousness throughout the ages. Preachers and writers of edifying books are apt to concentrate all their attention upon these golden texts and to ignore everything in the Bible, which does not satisfy the moral aspiration of our own day. It would be pleasant and easy to follow their example.

A moment's reflection, however, will show us that the course just described is unscientific and misleading. The ethical ideas of the Bible were not without antecedents; they must be studied historically. Revelation is subject to natural law and the light of truth found its

way, as with the gradual breaking of the dawn, to the hearts of Israel's spiritual teachers. The Bible supplies us with a record of this progressive revelation and the highest ethical teachings therein contained will be better appreciated if we compare them with the crude conceptions from which they took their origin in a more primitive age. Consider for example the teaching, stated or implied in various parts of the Bible, concerning the duty of truthfulness. From the dawn of Israel's history, the violation of an oath was regarded as a grave offense against God, but no blame attached originally to those who outwitted an enemy by telling an untruth, when they were not put upon their oath. Abraham and Jacob, as characterized in the earliest Hebrew legends, tell lies without any apparent scruple. Moses is represented as asking Pharaoh to sanction the temporary departure of the Israelites into the wilderness for the purpose of a religious festival, although he intended from the first that they should never return to Egypt. We read that the prophet Samuel was ordered by God to prevaricate to the elders of Bethlehem, because his life would have been endangered, if he had disclosed the true purpose of his coming to their city. David's perfidy to Uriah was severely condemned, but his systematic deception of Achish was probably regarded as patriotic and praiseworthy. In the book of Kings, we read that God Himself sent a lying spirit to Ahab's prophets so that the wicked king might be enticed to his destruction.[1] On the other hand, to deceive a fellow tribesman was condemned from the first, especially if

[1] I Kings 22:20-22.

the person deceived was one to whom obedience and respect were due. The severe penalty inflicted upon Gehazi for his attempt to deceive Elisha illustrates this fact for the preprophetic period. The prophets built upon these basic conceptions and greatly extended the range of their application. "In the prophetical writings, lying is conceived not merely as a principal kind, but almost as the soul of wickedness, and so sometimes appears as the symbol of all moral evil."[2] In the exilic and post-exilic sections of the Bible, the duty of truth speaking is regarded as absolute. "Lie not one to another." "The lip of truth shall be established for ever; but a lying tongue is but for a moment." "Yahweh, who shall sojourn in Thy Tabernacle? * * * He that speaketh truth in his heart."[3] These are only a few out of many passages, which show how richly the teaching of the prophets bore fruit. Truth came to be regarded as the ideal virtue, which was characteristic of God's people. Whereas the right hand of aliens was a right hand of falsehood, the remnant of Israel would not speak lies, neither would a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth.[4]

Or consider again how usage and feeling varied with regard to the legitimacy of personal vengeance. Lamech, Gideon and Samson, heroes of the old Hebrew sagas, became illustrious because of their prowess in executing blood revenge upon their public and private enemies. "In earlier times when the *lex talionis* was in

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[2]Hastings, *Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. III, p. 112.
[3]Lev. 19:11; Prov. 12:19; Ps. 15:1-2.
[4]Ps. 144:8; Zeph 3: 13 (a post-exilic passage).

unrestricted operation, no one stopped to ask whether the slayer did the deed by accident or with malice prepense. Joab took the life of Abner, although he knew that his rival had killed his brother in self-defense."[5] This right of "wild justice" (once indeed an obligation) was gradually limited. The unintentional homicide was protected from injury; retaliation was restricted so that one life only, that of the murderer himself, might be exacted for a life; finally the avenger of blood was not allowed to execute justice on the murderer until the case had been investigated by an impartial tribunal. Similarly men gradually realized that they must not avenge personal injuries, inflicted on them. David was at first inclined to wreak vengeance on Nabal, but he achieved self-mastery and left his cause to God. In other cases he displayed great magnanimity and forgave unreservedly his personal foes.[6] Joseph, according to the Elohist, accepted the repentance of his brethren in the most generous spirit.[7] Notable also is the early law, that proper attention must be given to the ox or the ass of an enemy, if it be found going astray or overburdened.[8] Such legislation was probably in part the cause and in part the effect of the humane disposition of the Hebrew nation, whose kings, as judged by contemporary standards, were noted for their mercy towards fallen enemies.[9] It is

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[5]Mitchell, *The Ethics of the Old Testament*, p. 115.

[6]The repulsive death-bed scene in 1 Kings: 2:1-9 is, we may well suppose, unhistorical (See *Encyclopoedia Biblica*, p. 1034n).

[7]Gen. 50:15-21.

[8]Ex. 23:4-5.

[9]1 Kings 20:31.

true that atrocities were sometimes committed in war. The extermination of the Canaanites never happened on the scale recorded in the book of Joshua, but the total population of cities captured by storm was sometimes put to the sword under the influence of a religious frenzy. It was not yet understood that we should hate idolatry, but love the idolater. This partly explains the fact, which at first sight seems very disappointing, that hostility to national enemies is sometimes expressed with peculiar emphasis after the exile. It was an era when the pious Jew regarded with horror the idolatry and moral corruption of the heathen world. Those who were on the Lord's side, felt impelled to pray that He should cut off the workers of iniquity by His just decree, so that they might no longer vex or tempt the righteous. Further, Israel, from the fall of Jerusalem until the completion of the Canon, was so often subjected to cruel oppression at the hands of the nations that we can well understand the occasional outbursts of hatred, which occur in certain psalms and in other Biblical writings. It would not have been wonderful if the whole Jewish nation, including its religious leaders, had cherished the same feeling of blind hostility to the gentiles. But this was not the case. After the exile, there began the dispersion of Israel, the lingering suffering of which was not without its compensations. Foreign nations became better known, sometimes proving repulsive to the Jews, but sometimes also attractive. It is not surprising therefore that the later books of the Bible supply such striking examples of particularistic and also of universalistic feeling. In many a noble picture of the Messianic era, our

seers and poets give expression to hopes not only for their own nation but also for all mankind, who shall at last be united in love to God and man through the missionary efforts of Israel. Some Biblical writers pray for the utter destruction of their natural enemies, but others believe that the heathen will be redeemed through chastisement: "Jahweh shall smite Egypt, smiting and healing; and when they return unto Jahweh, He shall receive their supplication and shall heal them."[10] We even find, in one place, the remarkable doctrine that the gods of the actual unregenerate nations were only so many names of the one true God, so that heathen worship was in reality "incense offered unto His name and a pure oblation." (Malachi 1:11). Thus much was done by the finer spirits in post-exilic Israel to moderate the bitterness of national feuds. As to the revenge of private wrongs, it was henceforward forbidden without reserve. The message of the Book of Proverbs is that we must overcome hatred by love and take a noble revenge upon our enemies by helping them in their need.[11]

The most constant element in the ethical teaching of the Bible is insistence on justice, especially on justice to the helpless; this we find in almost every section, to

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[10]Isaiah 19:22; Compare Jer. 12:14-17, Isaiah 26:9, Zeph. 3:8-9 and perhaps Ps 83:16.

[11]Prov. 10:12; 25:21-22, etc. Compare also Job 31:29-30. Fault is often found with Prov. 24:17-18: "At the fall of the enemy rejoice not, at his overthrow do not exult, lest Yahweh see and be displeased and turn His anger from him." But the meaning seems to be that the avenger is more guilty than the enemy, on whom he takes vengeance; the divine punishment will therefore fall on his own head. So Toy in the *International Critical Commentary*. In post-biblical literature, we find still

whatever age it belongs. It is a remarkable fact, however, that the portions of Scripture, written before the book of Deuteronomy, contain few references to the charitable relief of the poor. The bestowal of such assistance is never recorded in the legends of the patriarchs, which reflect the popular ideal of a perfect life in the brave days of old; nor do we read of it in the books of Judges and Samuel. Elijah and especially Elisha perform, according to the book of Kings, miracles of benevolence, similar to those afterwards attributed to Jesus; these narrations and the actual facts that underlie them, probably mark the gradual formation of a new ideal of goodness. In the earliest code of Hebrew legislation—that contained in the so-called *Book of the Covenant* (Exodus XXI—XXIII)—the only laws of charity are the prohibition of usury and the command that the land should lie fallow in the seventh year "that the poor of thy people may eat and what they leave the beast of the field shall eat."[12] Man's duty to man, as conceived by Amos, Isaiah and Micah, is to be just and to check injustice in others.[13] Hosea, it is true, gives a

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loftier teaching with regard to the forgiveness of our enemies. Many illustrative passages are collected in the article "Enemy, treatment of an," in the *Jewish Encyclopedia.* There is another noble passage bearing on this subject in the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* (T. Gad 6:3-7). Dr. R. H. Charles, the leading authority on the apocalyptic books, considers this to be "the most remarkable statement on the subject of forgiveness in all ancient literature."

[12]Exodus 22:25-27; 23:11.

[13]In Isaiah 32:8, the citizen of the ideal Messianic commonwealth is characterised as *Nadib,* i. e., a noble, self-sacrificing philanthropist. But this passage is almost certainly post-exilic as is the great saying in Micah: "What does Yahweh re-

deeper interpretation to the idea of virtue, which he traces back to its source in a heart filled with dutiful love (*hesed*) to God and man. Even so, Hosea considers that the loving heart is, above everything, true to the obligations of civil righteousness. When he complains that there is no love in the land, he does not mean that his contemporaries are merely harsh and unkind, but that they show their loveless disposition by swearing, lying, killing, stealing, adultery.[14] In short, Hosea realized justice and love as interdependent. He admonished his people to sow for themselves righteousness and to reap the fruit of love.[15]

The reason why so little is said about charity in the older portions of the Bible is not far to seek. It is because Hebrew civilization, like other ancient polities, was partly founded on slavery. "Charity finds an extended scope for action only when there exists a large class of men at once independent and impoverished. In the ancient societies, slavery in a great measure replaced pauperism and by securing the subsistence of a very large proportion of the poor contracted the sphere of charity."[16] The institution of slavery in Israel goes back to the dawn of history. *Ebed,* the Hebrew word for slave, is common in all parts of the Bible and is found in the other Semitic dialects: *sachir,* on the other hand,

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quire of thee? Only to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God" (Micah 6:8).

[14]Hosea 4:1-2. See Robertson Smith, *The Prophets of Israel,* (second edition) p. 162.

[15]Hosea 10:12. See Harper's note on passage in the *International Critical Commentary.*

[16]Lecky, *History of European Morals,* Vol. 2, p. 73.

first occurs in Isaiah in the sense of a mercenary soldier,[17] and it is not applied to a wage-earner by any writer earlier than the Deuteronomist.[18] In more ancient times, the people carried out their agricultural or pastoral work with the aid of slaves, some of whom were foreign prisoners of war, whilst others were of native birth—insolvent debtors, convicted thieves who could not make good their theft, children sold into slavery by poor parents, destitute paupers who had sold themselves as bondmen. Now the lot of a slave, who lives in enforced dependence upon the will of another man, can never be secure or satisfactory, but he is much more happily situated in some countries than in others. We gather from a number of indications that the slaves who lived in an ancient Israelite household, were treated as though they were in some sort members of the family. Thus the slave Eliezer, although a foreigner, was in Abraham's confidence and was considered a possible heir to his master. Abigail asked advice from one of her husband's slaves at a time of danger. Saul was on terms of intimacy with his slave. During their search for the asses they exchanged ideas freely and they sat down together at the feast. When Saul required some money for the prophet's fee, his slave lent it to him; hence it appears that slaves were in possession of property. Foreign captives, subjected to task work—"hewers of wood and drawers of water"—were in much worse case; but even they possessed a recognized status in the commu-

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[17]See Isaiah 16:14; 21:16. So Jer. 46:21.

[18]See Deut. 24:14.

nity,[19] and their interest was protected not only by custom but by law. In the Book of the Covenant, in Deuteronomy, and in the Priestly Code alike, we find provisions, which became in course of time more and more stringent, to save slaves from unfair treatment. The laws for their protection in the Book of the Covenant gave to a Hebrew slave the option of freedom after seven years' service; they make man-stealing a capital offense; they provide for the punishment of a master who beats his slave to death and for the freedom of a slave deprived of an eye or tooth; they secure for man-servants and maid-servants a share of Sabbath rest. Some of these laws were stumbling blocks to faith, whilst it was still believed that the inspiration of the Bible was absolute and unchanging. Special difficulty was felt in understanding why sure vengeance should be taken upon a master if his slave dies beneath the lash, but not if the latter survived for a day or two, "for he is his money." We now perceive that laws of this character represent an advance on earlier usage which empowered a master to kill his slave at pleasure and that they mark an important stage in the evolution of ethics.

Kind to their slaves, the ancient Hebrews were also kind to strangers. As we have seen, opportunities for charity are restricted in a primitive community. It is otherwise with the practice of hospitality, which is especially important at a time when the wayfarer is not protected by any public authority and his sole reliance is on the generosity of individuals. It was tempting to

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[19]See Deut. 29:11. This is a late passage, but it may register a more ancient usage.

take advantage of a stranger's weakness, but mankind learned to obey a nobler impulse. Human nature changed; the demand for a virtue created a supply of it. The virtue of hospitality was highly esteemed amongst many nations of antiquity. It plays a part of especial importance in the religious life of the Israelites, who gave to wayfarers generous entertainment and protection.[20] Nor was their kindness displayed only to transient guests. The *ger* or protected stranger who had come to settle in the land of Israel was held to be under the protection of the God of Israel. According to the most ancient Hebrew legislation, such strangers must not be oppressed and they must be permitted to rest on the Sabbath if they render service in return for their protection. Our feeling towards them must be sympathetic: "ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt."[21]

Thus the keynote of Israel's earliest legislation was justice mated with chivalry. It implied a general conception of social ethics, already perfect and absolute, however imperfectly it was at first understood. Amos, Hosea, Isaiah and Micah cannot rightly be described as

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[20]The assassination of Sisera by Jael, as related in Judges Ch. 4, involved a treacherous breach of hospitality and was in contravention to the rules of morality, ancient as well as modern. But the account is based on a misunderstanding, as can be seen when it is compared with the poem in Judges, Ch. 5, where the incident is described by a contemporary. "The act by which Jael gained such renown was not the murder of a sleeping man, but the use of a daring stratagem which gave her a momentary chance to deliver a courageous blow." (Robertson Smith, *The Old Testament in the Jewish Church, p.* 132.)

[21]Ex. 22:21; 23:9; 23:12.

the "creators of ethical monotheism" for Yahweh had long ago revealed Himself to Israel as the God of righteousness. These great prophets did not proclaim a new morality, but they warned their people of impending ruin, which could only be averted by the performance of duties familiar but neglected. Their originality mainly consisted in the peculiar emphasis, which they placed upon God's absolute righteousness. He would punish guilty Israel with a punishment at least as severe as that inflicted on other sinful nations. Nor could the divine wrath be appeased by the pious observance of ritual requirements. The whole sacrificial system, with its accompanying ceremonial, was swept aside by Amos and the other pre-exilic prophets as utterly vain. They believed that God required from his people righteousness and nothing else.

The result of prophetic teaching, so far as it could be embodied in a code, was the book of Deuteronomy. Here ceremonialism comes into its own again; it plays a part subordinate although important. "With priestly institutions the author has greater sympathy than the prophets generally. * * * A right heart, instinct with true affections towards God and man, is indeed the only religion which has value in his eyes: but he is aware that external forms, if properly observed, may exercise and keep alive a religious spirit, may guard Israel's "holiness" from profanation and preserve it from contamination with heathen influences.[22] The Deuteronomist gives an ethical and humanitarian tinge to some of the

[22]Driver on Deuteronomy (*International Critical Commentary*) p. XXX.

ritual laws which he takes over from primitive custom or earlier legislation. He admonishes his people that they should show hospitality towards the destitute on the occasion of religious festivals (Deut. 16:11, 14), and that they should allow not only their own dependents but also settlers in the land to rest on the Sabbath (5: 14). Very striking is the law in Deuteronomy with reference to the privileges of gleaners (24: 19-21). There is a widespread superstition that the last sheaf of corn left in the field contains the corn spirit and that it is dangerous to take it away with the others. The Deuteronomist makes no mention of this scruple, but he makes a good use of the custom based upon it and reserves the gleanings in field, olive-garden and vineyard for the enjoyment of the settler, the orphan and the widow. To these and other dependent classes of society he also assigns a tithe of all the crops in every third year (14:29; 26:12-15). Similarly he directs that a liberal gift be rendered to Hebrew slaves on the occasion of their manumission. (15:13-14).

In Deuteronomy, laws of justice to all and particularly to the poor are more detailed and elaborate than before. There are besides many regulations that tend to foster the growth of kindness and forbearance to others in all the relationships of life. Man, declares the Deuteronomist, should walk in God's ways (10:12). I think the Rabbis rightly explain this to mean that we should imitate the divine attributes and be merciful even as God is merciful.[23] Accordingly the lawgiver warns us

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[23]See Sifre on Deut. 10:12. The thought is clearly involved in the teaching of Deut. 10:17-19. "Yahweh loves the stranger. . . Love ye also the stranger."

not only to treat others generously but also to enter into their feelings lest they be exposed to shame. Thus a creditor is not given the right of entry into the borrower's house in order to take away a pledge as security for the debt; he must wait until it is brought out to him (24:10-11). Tools of trade must not be taken in pledge at all (24:6); a poor man's mantle may be so taken, but it must be restored at night time, "that he may sleep in his garment and bless thee" (24:12-13). Excessive corporal punishment is forbidden, "lest thy brother be dishonored before thy sight" (25:3). The Israelite must provide a parapet to his house top, lest he endanger human life (22:8). If he finds lost property, he must restore it to his "brother," that is to say, not only to a fellow Israelite, but also to the member of a kindred race (22:1-3). Amongst the "brethren" of Israel, the Edomite is specifically included (23:7). "The owner of a vineyard or field of corn is not to grudge the passerby a few grapes or ears of corn if he plucks them as he walks along; on the other hand the passerby is not to take advantage of the liberty thus granted to him, for the purpose of enriching himself unreasonably at his neighbor's expense."[24] Runaway slaves are not to be handed over to their masters, but must be given free right of settlement in the land (23:15-16); to harbor such a fugitive was a capital offense according to the code of Hammurabi, so that this law at least cannot have been derived from Babylon. The Deuteronomist teaches that we must show kindness not only to man

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[24]Driver, op. cit. on Deut. 23:24-25.

but also to beast; we must allow our cattle to rest on the Sabbath and we must not muzzle the ox when he is treading out the corn (5:14, 25:4). In short, we must not "harden our heart or shut our hand" from any that need our help.

The ethical teaching of Jeremiah followed the same lines as those pursued by the earlier prophets. Like them, he warned his people against the oppression of the weak, against bloodshed and theft, adultery and falsehood. But he realized that it is not enough to denounce outward manifestations of wrongdoing. The root of sin is within the heart, which must be cleansed and dedicated to God, before true religion is possible to man. Hence he is led to his doctrine of the "new covenant," which we have already considered in some detail.

Ezekiel's conception of morality is best illustrated by the following passage, in which he characterizes a typically righteous man: "If a man be just and do that which is lawful and right, and has not eaten upon the mountains" (i. e. he has not shared in the corrupt sacrificial feasts at the mountain shrines) "neither has he lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, neither has he defiled his neighbor's wife, neither has he come near to a woman in her separation;[25] and he has not wronged any, but has restored to the debtor his pledge, has spoiled none by violence, has given his

[25]This prohibition which does not occur in the earlier Law-literature, is first found in Lev. 20:18 (in the Holiness Code). It rests, however, on a Taboo, almost universal, and dates from remote antiquity. See Robertson Smith, *Religion of the Semites, p.* 447.

bread to the hungry, and has covered the naked with a garment; he that has not given forth upon usury, neither has taken any increase, that has withdrawn his hand from iniquity, has executed true judgment between man and man, has walked in my statutes, and has kept my judgments to deal truly; he is just, he shall surely live, saith the Lord Yahweh." (Ezek. 18:5-9). Thus virtue, as the prophet understands it, mainly consists in obedience to the laws of Deuteronomy, that prohibit idolatry, impurity of worship and of life, injustice and oppression. But Ezekiel is the first to mention amongst the characteristics of the good man, that he "gives his bread to the hungry and covers the naked with a garment" not only at harvest time or at the celebration of a festival, but as one of the regular duties of daily life. Writing in the same spirit Ezekiel declared that the guilt of Sodom consisted in this, that its citizens in their pride and prosperity gave no support to the poor (Ezek. 16:49). The same lesson is expanded in form and rendered more appealing by the unknown prophet to whom we owe Isaiah 58—the chapter about the keeping of a true fast: "Is it not to share thy bread with the hungry and to bring the outcast poor into thy house? When thou seest the naked, thou shall cover him and hide not thyself from thy own flesh?" A beautiful spirit is at work here, but it is not the same as that of the earlier teachers. Amos would have said, Right the wrongs of the outcast poor: the prophet of the exile pleaded that their necessities should be relieved. A new concept of righteousness was being evolved, or perhaps we should say that the ideal of

righteousness was now regarded from a fresh angle. After the return from captivity, the administration of justice was only partly controlled by Israelites, who must needs submit to the caprices of alien rulers. Hence it was now impossible to root out oppression by means of human activity. The immediate task of good men was to relieve the victims of oppression and to pray for the speedy coming of a golden age, when the world would be saved by a divine catastrophe. As time went on the typical good deed was more and more regarded as an act of mercy rather than of justice. We already see an approach to this conception in the psalmist's picture of the ideal man, who "disperses and gives to the poor" so that "his righteousness endures for ever" (Ps. 112:9). But righteousness and mercy are not as yet identified: "all that is meant is that mercifulness is one feature of the ideal righteous character."

The new conception of righteousness, that gained ground after the exile, supplemented but did not supplant the moral ideals of the great prophets from Amos to Jeremiah. More stress was now laid upon generosity, but the claims of justice were not forgotten. A few voices were still heard to declare that nothing matters except obedience to the behests of morality. A psalmist taught that man's fellowship with God depends entirely upon the fulfilment of his duty to his neighbor, no mention being made of any ritual requirements (Ps. 15). Zechariah informed the returning exiles that it was a matter of indifference whether they fasted or feasted; to win God's favor, they must speak the truth, set up wholesome justice, plan no evil against others and love

no false oath (Zech. 8:16). But the dominant teaching of the time was different. Religious enthusiasm, divorced through force of circumstances from national life, found expression in personal piety, in ceremonial observance and in devotion to the sacred book of the Law. Not that the ethical side of religion was forgotten. The central precept of the time was "Be holy" and holiness included man's duty to man as well as his real or imaginary duty to God. In the name of holiness, he ate no tabooed meat and wore no coat made from tabooed cloth; but also in the name of holiness, he was called upon to be honorable, considerate, just and pure. It is to the age of Ezekiel that we owe the noble moral teaching in the nineteenth chapter of Leviticus, including the immortal precepts, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," "Thou shalt love the foreign settler as thyself." (Lev. 19:18, 34). They are the whole Law and all else is commentary.

In the psalms, the teaching of social ethics is mostly indirect. They include a few didactic poems, designed to teach the fear of the Lord. But usually they are addressed not to man, but to God. As he begins his prayer or praise, the heart of the psalmist is filled with the remembrance of the divine glory, with gratitude for the protection granted him, with longing for forgiveness and for the joy of God's presence within the soul. His intent is to seek after grace rather than to teach others. But the words of many a psalm are a source of moral inspiration, that has never failed the children of men during the long ages that have passed since it was written. When we read of God, as the psalmists picture

Him, just, glorious and loving, hating wickedness and befriending the lowly, we become conscious of an ideal, towards which we would fain struggle upwards in our dealings with our fellows.

The book of Proverbs, on the other hand, is didactic from beginning to end. Its aim is to attach its readers to "wisdom," that is to say, to a method of life based on practical good sense and on the fear of God. In contradistinction from the books of the prophets and from nearly all the psalms, it takes no account of national life; it instructs individuals how to live good lives whether in a public or private station, and warns them to be clean livers, temperate in eating and drinking, modest and industrious. The demands of social ethics also receive attention. We are taught to behave justly and sincerely, to refrain from slander, to be patient, good-tempered and forgiving. There is little that is new in this advice, but it was never before expressed in Jewish literature in such a spirit of universalism. Wisdom here calls not to Israel but to mankind; her voice is to all the sons of men. For our present purpose, the most interesting verses in the book are those dealing with the relationship between rich and poor. A few proverbs describe the situation from the standpoint of a detached and rather worldly observer, as when we are told that "the poor man uses entreaties, but the rich answers roughly" (Prov. 18:23), or that "the poor man is hated even by his neighbor" (14:20). But this unsympathetic attitude, which the sage has observed in many rich men, is condemned by him:

"He who despises his neighbor sins,
But happy he who has pity on the poor" (14:21).

Almsgiving is frequently commended as a virtuous act, rewarded by God, for "whosoever has pity upon the poor lends to Yahweh" (19:17). The ideal housewife is charitable and sympathetic; "she spreads out her hands to the poor" and "kindly counsel is on her tongue" (31:20, 26). Very notable also is the following proverb:

"The rich and the poor meet together,
Yahweh is the maker of them all" (22:2).

"The meaning is: there are social differences among men; but all men, as creatures of God, have their rights and their natural obligations of respect and kindness" (Toy). The proverb gives fine expression to a fundamental truth.

The book of Job is inspired by noble humanitarian sentiment. Its theme is the undeserved affliction of the righteous. The circumstances of the poet's age forced this perennial problem into special prominence. Towards the end of the Babylonian captivity, the pious Israelite had believed that his period of trial would soon be over and that the glory of Yahweh was about to shine upon him in the sight of all flesh. These anticipations of salvation had not, however, been realized after the return of the exiles. Israel under the Persians was still oppressed: "the earth was given into the hand of the wicked" and there seemed no prospect of release. The world was out of joint and it seemed most unlikely that any one would be born to set it right. The perplexing questions, that troubled the mind of his contemporaries, are presented to us by the author of Job as the laments

of a blameless sufferer, who speaks not only in his own name but in that of afflicted humanity. As we read the book, the poet makes us share some of his own sympathy with his fellow-men. Again and again, Job describes his woeful plight with simple pathos and arouses our pity for all who suffer as he did, so that we feel a call to give them relief. It is a very fine thought of the poet, when he shows us that Job, in the intensity of his own agony, was able to feel for others.[26] His picture of the submerged masses in town and country is painfully realistic; would that it were more completely obsolete even now! We are shown the vagrants, who herd together like wild asses in the wilderness, with no shelter except the rocks and caves and with no food except the roots and garbage of the desert. Others are forced by hunger into complete slavery or into a condition of bondage, which amounts to the same thing. They toil on their masters' estates and starve in the midst of plenty:

"They go naked without clothing,
Themselves hungry, they carry sheaves,
They make oil within the walls of these men,
They tread wine presses but themselves suffer thirst."

And city life is no better:

"From out the city the dying groan,,
And the soul of the wounded cries out."

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[26]See Job Ch. 24. In the book of Ecclesiastes also, the thought of man's inhumanity to man excites in the author a deep sympathy with the oppressed, who have none to dry their tears.

Job speaks, as it has been finely said, as a very tribune of the oppressed masses. His words reach down the ages and plead the cause of the poor.

Very beautiful again is Job's description of his own happy past, when he was honored and beloved by all on account of his benevolence and love of justice:

"When the ear heard of me, it called me blessed,
And when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me:
Because I delivered the poor that cried,
The fatherless also that had none to help him.
The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me,
And I caused the widow's heart to sing with joy.
I was eyes to the blind,
And feet was I to the lame.
I was father to the poor,
And the cause of him whom I knew not I searched out."

(Job 29:11-16).

This same sense of social obligation is apparent in Job's closing speech (Job 31), in which he protests his innocence of mortal sin. He lays special stress upon the guilt which he would have incurred, had he ignored the rights and claims of humanity. In dealing with his slaves, he had never abused his power, for he realized that the slave was also a child of God—

"Did not He that made me in the womb make him?
And did not One fashion us both?"

He had ministered to the necessities of his fellow creatures with an unsparing hand. He had shared his daily bread with the poor and clothed them with the

fleeces of his sheep. He had not allowed the stranger to sleep in the street, but had opened his doors for all who needed shelter. And Job's words seem to end hopefully. His kindness and just conduct towards his fellow men must vindicate him at last. "Once more he throws himself on God no longer in passionate expostulation, but in pleading humility" (Froude). Thus his ears are opened to hear the voice of God, who bids him contemplate the beauty and wonder of nature and rest assured that eternal goodness lies concealed in the heart of all things.

One further concept of social duty, as presented in the Bible, must not be forgotten. Besides saving our fellow men from suffering, we must save them from sin. Such is the teaching of the Holiness Code: "thou shalt surely rebuke thy neighbor, and not bear sin because of him" (Lev. 19:17), by omitting to point out his faults. Malachi's ideal priest so gained men's confidence that they sought instruction at his mouth and "he turned many away from iniquity" (Mal. 2:6). The penitent psalmist resolved that he would use his own experience of sin and of deliverance from sin to reclaim others who had fallen:

> "I will teach transgressors Thy ways,
> And sinners shall be converted unto Thee."
> (Ps. 51:13).

Above all, the conviction is cherished in some exilic and post-exilic prophecies, that Israel would become the teacher of religion to the world. "The remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many nations as dew from Jahweh" (Micah 5:7), which gives life and refreshment.

From Zion would go forth instruction to establish peace universal amongst men.[27] Israel or a company of faithful men in Israel was appointed to be the servant of Yahweh, who should "set true religion in the earth." In the performance of this great mission, the servant of Yahweh would not shrink from shame and persecution. His faith would be far higher than that of Job, for he would understand the beauty of self-sacrifice and accept adversity in a gentle and uncomplaining spirit. The chastisement that brought healing to his fellow men would be upon him and recovery would come to them through his wounds.[28] The details of the picture are left undetermined; we are not told in what way the servant of Yahweh bears the diseases of others and the burden of their guilt. We find no formulated doctrine of vicarious punishment or even of vicarious suffering. But there is no mistaking the ideal which the poet makes us admire in the creature of his imagination and calls upon us to realize, so far as we can, in our own lives. The servant of Yahweh

> " . . rejects the lore
> Of nicely calculated less or more."

He does not count the cost to himself, if he can help his fellow men. He is willing to die, if need be, that others may live.

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[27]Isaiah 2:1-4, Micah 4:1-3.

[28]The passages about the servant of Yahweh, referred to, are Isaiah 42:4; 50:6; 53:4-7.

III

SOME RABBINIC CONCEPTS OF SOCIAL DUTY

The charge is commonly made against Judaism that its conception of righteousness is harsh and narrow. It is said that Judaism lays stress upon justice, while Christianity alone exalts the surpassing quality of mercy. But this criticism ignores the evolution of ethics in the history of Israel. Before the exile, the sterner side of virtue was made to stand in strong relief, because the leading thought of prophets and lawgivers was that of a whole nation, founded on righteousness. In public administration, the supreme requisite is justice, for it is only through justice that the weak will obtain merciful treatment. Chivalry and humane conduct were, from the first, included in the Israelite's conception of morality, but the importance of these qualities was, as we have already seen, particularly emphasized after the Babylonian captivity. Henceforward Israel never regained its political independence except for a brief space in the days of the Maccabees; in these changed circumstances it was inevitable that ideals of conduct should also change. The phase of righteousness, that came into special prominence was that which one individual can

practice towards another. The summit of virtue, as described by the Rabbis, is attained by the merciful man who renders to his neighbor his neighbor's due and more besides. Severely condemned is he who insists on his strict legal rights and says, "What is mine is mine, and what is thine is thine."[5] The righteous man must be generous besides being just.

Thus the conception of "righteousness"was varied in the course of time, and the Hebrew word *tsedakah,* expressing the idea of righteousness, underwent a corresponding change of meaning. In the Bible, *tsedakah* stands for justice and for the blessings and victories whereby a just cause is vindicated; or it means the sum total of moral qualities amongst which justice and mercy are both included. But in post-biblical Hebrew, this word denotes any exercise of benevolence that goes beyond the letter of the law.[6] So far from including the quality of justice it actually excludes it: "where judgment is, there is no room for *tsedakah,* and where *tsedakah* is, there is no judgment.[7] In the Jewish prayer book, God is besought to deal in *tsedakah* (charity) and in kindness with his creatures who cannot plead for their justification good deeds of their own.[8] The usual meaning of *tsedakah* in post-biblical Hebrew is still more specialized; as a rule it denotes almsgiving. This usage probably appears already in one of the chapters of Dan-

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[5]Aboth V:13. Many other illustrative passages are quoted in Schechter, *Some Aspects of Rabbinic Theology,* pp. 215-216.

[6]The word *tsedek,* however, continues to denote justice and righteousness in post-biblical Hebrew.

[7]Sanhedrin 6b.

[8]*Authorized Daily Prayer-Book* (ed. Singer), p. 57.

iel, written in Aramaic: "Break off thy sins by *tsidkah* and thine iniquities by showing mercy to the poor."[9] *Tsidkah* may here mean "good deeds," but the parallelism of the verse rather suggests that it has acquired the special sense of almsgiving, which so often belongs to it in subsequent literature. This change in the use of language corresponded with the change of thought, already described. Benevolence came to be regarded as the highest quality which man can practice towards man; the faithful Jew was eager to give expression to his kindly disposition by liberality to the poor. He regarded almsgiving as righteousness in action.

Benevolence is virtuous, but it is certainly not the whole of virtue; still less should almsgiving be identified with righteousness. By laying so much stress on mercy, the Jews might be thought to have neglected the claims of justice, upon which their great prophets had insisted so strongly. Such a charge might be substantiated against some degenerate Jews but not against the teachers of Judaism. The merciful deeds of an unjust man in Israel were considered as worthless. "If a man steals with one hand," said the Rabbis, "and gives charity with the other hand, he will not be acquitted in the hereafter."[10] True charity must be mated with justice: "whosoever practices charity and justice

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[9]Daniel 4:27. In the original Hebrew of Ecclesiasticus, written at a date earlier than that of Daniel *tsedakah* sometimes means "almsgiving" and sometimes "righteousness."

[10]Midrash on Prov. 11:21. Cf. "He that sacrifices of a thing wrongly gotten, his offering is made in mockery" (Ecclesiasticus 34:18).

fills as it were the world with love."[11] We may say indeed that Judaism regards charity as a branch of justice. According to the Bible the poor man, who is our brother and our flesh, has an actual right to our assistance. Those who fail to render the charitable gifts, specified in the Mosaic Law, are called by the Rabbis robbers of the poor.[12] It was considered to be the privilege of a rich Jew, and not merely his duty, to aid his brethren. "The poor man," said R. Joshua (second century) "does more for the householder than the householder does for him. The one receives material assistance, the other is rewarded by God for a meritorious deed."[13] This conception exerted upon the Jewish people an influence which was not an unmixed blessing, but it emphasized the vital truth that charitable deeds are not mere works of supererogation. As the Rev. Morris Joseph has finely written: "The love which is enjoined upon us is seen to be, after all, but another name for justice. Forgiveness, forbearance, charity, merciful acts of every kind, become the rightful due of our fellow-man, who, like ourself, is a unit of the human brotherhood. * * * It is because charity is given so often as an act of grace and not as a debt due to the poor, that it is given so ungraciously, and thus fails to achieve its great end—the closing of the rent that divides the social organism."[14] Charity, as enjoined by Judaism, was not tainted by this defect.

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[11]Succah 49b.
[12]Aboth V:12.
[13]Leviticus Rabbah, Ch. 34.
[14]*Judaism as Creed and Life*, pp. 399-400.

Although the Rabbis magnify the merit of almsgiving, they lay even greater stress upon benevolence as a general rule of life. According to one of the most ancient sayings in the Mishna, the world was created to serve three ends—the study of the Law, the worship of God and the bestowal of kindness.[15] In three respects, say the Rabbis, kindness excels almsgiving: we can show kindness, not only by gracious gifts, but also by gracious deeds and words; we can be kind to rich and poor alike; we can manifest our kindly disposition even in our treatment of the dead, when we busy ourselves in their honorable burial.[16] In the same passage of the Talmud, R. Eleazar[17] (third century) is recorded as pronouncing almsgiving to be greater than all the offerings; but he declares it to be rewarded by God only so far as it contains the element of personal kindness. If we would dry the tears of those who suffer, the first requirement is a gracious disposition. This doctrine, which pervades the whole of Rabbinic literature, is finely expressed in Ecclesiasticus (the book of Ben Sira), composed at the dawn of the period, when Scribe and Pharisee were about to replace prophet and psalmist as Israel's spiritual leaders. The following scattered verses show how noble a type of benevolence was preached by Ben Sira:

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[15]Aboth I:2.

[16]Succah 49b.

[17]R. Eleazar b. Pedat was himself exceedingly poor and frequently sang the praises of charity. For a collection of his sayings on the subject, see *Jewish Ency.* s. v. Eleazar II.

"Reject not the supplication of the afflicted,
Neither turn away thy face from a poor man." (4:4).
"Fail not to be with them that weep,
And mourn with them that mourn.
Be not slow to visit the sick.
For that shall make thee to be beloved" (7:34-35).
"My son, blemish not thy good deeds,
Neither use uncomfortable words when thou givest anything" (18:15).
"Lo, is not a word better than a gift,
But both are with a gracious man" (18:17).

All this teaching was repeated and emphasized by the sages of Talmud and Midrash. In particular, it was a favorite thought that a gracious word is as essential as a gracious deed.[18]

In the book of Tobit, probably written in the second century B. C., great stress is laid on the meritoriousness of almsgiving. The following passage is characteristic: "Give alms of thy substance; and when thou givest alms, let not thine eye be envious, neither turn thy face from any poor, and the face of God shall not be turned away from thee. If thou hast abundance, give alms accordingly: if thou hast but a little be not afraid to give according to that little: for thou layest up a good treasure for thyself against the day of necessity. Because that alms do deliver from death and suffer not to come into darkness." We find here two conceptions that were greatly developed in subsequent Jewish teaching. All men, whether rich or poor, are taught to give charity,

[18]Cf. Baba Bathra 9b, Sifre on Deut. 15:10.

so far as their means permit. "Charity is like a coat of mail, made up of many small scales."[19] "Even the poor man," said Mar Zutra, "who is himself supported by charity, should give charity to others."[20] Indeed the sacrifices of the poor, like the widow's mite in the New Testament, were held to be more acceptable than any others for it was their very life that they rendered.[21]

Equally characteristic, if less admirable, is the doctrine, found in Tobit as already in Ecclesiasticus, that there is an atoning power in almsgiving. "Righteousness (*tsedakah*) delivers from death," we read in the Book of Proverbs (10:2). Tobit quotes this verse, but understands *tsedakah* to mean almsgiving.[22] This false exegesis, probably exemplified rather than originated by Tobit, has been fraught with important results to Judaism and Christianity. The belief that almsgiving delivers from "death" (in whatever sense understood) supplied a new stimulus for liberality. Jewish teachers developed the idea in two directions. Sometimes they enlarged upon the redemptive power of almsgiving, through which our life on earth becomes long and prosperous and we escape a premature or violent death;[23] sometimes they extolled it as a means of salvation from the pangs of hell. The first of these conceptions notwithstanding its crudity, had an immense

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[19]Baba Bathra 9b.

[20]Gittin 7b.

[21]Menachoth 104b.

[22]See Tobit 12:9.

[23]Stories of miraculous escape from violent death through a charitable deed are given in Shabbath 156b.

influence on the Jewish consciousness, so long as belief in the miraculous was an active force in religious life. In Ecclesiasticus and Tobit, deliverance from death is to be understood quite literally, for the authors of these books knew nothing of divine retribution in another world; they still held the ancient Hebrew belief against which Job so strongly protested, that virtue receives a visible reward on earth. When belief in the Resurrection became general, it did not extinguish men's hope for earthly happiness, which could be secured sometimes if not always by almsgiving and other deeds pleasing to God. "For four causes a man escapes his doom; because of almsgiving, prayer, change of name, change of conduct."[24] When Benjamin the righteous was about to die, the angels interceded for him because of his liberality to a certain widow and twenty-two years were added to his life.[25] When R. Meir visited the town of Mamla, the inhabitants asked for his prayers, because they died young. "Busy yourselves in almsgiving," he said, and you will be privileged to enjoy old age."[26] It was believed that the charitable usually obtain worldly prosperity. "God will provide the man who pursues after charity with money to give in charity and with worthy persons upon whom to bestow it."[27] "If thou givest alms from thy purse," said R. Abba, "God will guard thee from town-taxes and town-fines, from capitation taxes and from taxes on crops."[28] It is not worth

[24]Rosh Ha-Shanah 16b.
[25]Baba Bathra 11a.
[26]Bereshith Rabbah, Ch. 59.
[27]Baba Bathra 9b.
[28]T. J. Peah I:1.

while to repeat the extravagant stories of the Talmud about the disasters which befell good men and their families, because they failed to render adequate and prompt help to the poor.[29] More worthy of notice is the admonition that we should show mercy to others, in the hope that we may receive mercy from them and theirs in the hour of need, for the wheel of fortune revolves and poverty will assuredly overtake us or some generation of our descendants.[30] The self-regarding motive for giving charity is here so etherealized, that it becomes almost altruistic.

The Rabbis teach without hesitation that God will in the hereafter reward all good deeds, particularly acts of personal kindness. "These are the things," we read in a well-known passage of the Mishna, which is incorporated in the Jewish liturgy, "the fruits of which a man enjoys in this world, whilst the stock remains for him for the world to come; honoring father and mother, the practice of charity, timely attendance at the house of study morning and evening, hospitality to wayfarers, visiting the sick, dowering the bride, attending the dead to the grave. * * *"[31] But more stress is laid in the Rabbinical writings upon the temporal blessings with which almsgiving is rewarded than upon its efficacy in the hereafter. The most interesting expression of the latter thought is put into the mouth of Monobaz, the

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[29]Cf. the story about the daughter of Nicodemus b. Gorion (Kethuboth 66b). For an English rendering see *The Story of the Jewish People,* by J. M. Myers, p. 156.

[30]Shabbath 151b.

[31]Peah I:1.

king of Adiabene, who sent large gifts for the relief of the poor of Jerusalem in a year of famine. His brethren having protested against such prodigal expenditure of his patrimony, he replied:

"My ancestors laid up here on earth, I, in heaven.
My ancestors laid up treasures where the human hand can reach them; I, where no human hand can reach them.
My ancestors laid up treasures that bear no fruit; I, such as bear fruit.
My ancestors laid up treasures of Mammon; I, treasures of souls.
My ancestors gathered and will not reap the benefit; I have gathered and shall reap the benefit.
My ancestors laid up treasures for this world; I, for the world to come."[32]

In this passage, as in the book of Tobit, almsgiving is viewed as the provision of "good treasure against the day of necessity." We are reminded also of Ben Sira's counsel, "Lay up thy treasure according to the commandments of the most High, and it shall bring thee more profit than gold. Shut up alms in thy storehouses, and it shall deliver thee from all affliction." (Ecclesiasticus 29:11-12). A closer parallel, however, by reason of its otherworldliness is supplied by the injunction in the Sermon on the Mount to "lay up treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal" (Matth. 6:20).[33]

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[32]Tosefta Peah IV:20 as rendered in the *Jewish Ency.*, s. v. Alms.

[33]The Church borrowed from the Synagogue the idea that sins could be remitted by almsgiving, but gave to this doctrine a much wider and more injurious extension. See Chadwick, *The Church, the State and the Poor*, pp. 41-49.

Such appeals to the benevolent are doubtless effective in many instances, but they have a bad influence in so far as they suggest the noxious doctrine that the poor exist in order that the rich may have opportunities to acquire merit. Indeed, R. Akiba almost said as much. "If your God loves the poor," he was asked by the Roman governor, "why does he not feed them?" R. Akiba answered that it was to save us by means of them from the judgment of Gehenna.[34] The following Talmudic passage carries still further the condonation of selfish charity: "He who says, I give this piece of money as alms that my sons may live or that I may inherit eternal life, is acting as a man, perfectly righteous."[35] The Talmud quotes this view with some appearance of hesitation but makes no attempt to reject it. And not altogether wrongly. The person, whose conduct is under consideration, must be taken as having acted from mixed motives. His desire to carry out the commandments of his Creator is combined with that of promoting his own advantage. Such conduct is certainly far from ideal. The inner grace corresponds imperfectly with the outward deed of charity and the deed itself is unlikely to be one of supremely efficient service. But imperfect righteousness must not be rejected with overmuch scorn. The lower motive does not exclude the higher motive; it even leads up to it. "Let a man study the Law and perform good deeds, even if not for their own sake, for afterwards he will come to do so for their own sake."[36]

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[34]Baba Bathra 10a.
[35]Pesachim 8a. See Rashi's note to the passage.
[36]Pesachim 50b.

Otherworldliness may ultimately bring us to show pity for pity's sake, or in more theological language, we may thus attain to the disinterested love of God and man. In the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs,* a Jewish Apocalyptic work written at the end of the first century B. C., Issachar is made to speak as the embodiment of this exalted benevolence: "On all the poor and oppressed I bestowed the good things of the earth *in the singleness of my heart.* * * * If any man were in distress I joined my sighs with his, and I shared my bread with the poor. * * * I loved the Lord; likewise also every man with all my heart."[37]

Belief in the atoning power of alms played no more than a subsidiary part in the promotion of charity among the Jews. The desire of personal advantage in this world or the next may incite people to liberality, but it will hardly make them exercise much thoughtfulness towards the poor, whom they are using for their own ends. Very different is the practical sympathy which the Rabbis recommended and their people practiced. There is every reason to believe that the charitable Jew of the past (and the same may be said of the typical charitable Jew of the present) served his fellow-man in a spirit of whole-hearted humanity. This fact is made apparent by the great delicacy of feeling, with which charity was given under the direction of the Rabbis. It was regarded as essential that the recipient should not be put to shame. Rabbi Yannai once saw some one giving a silver coin in public to a poor man.

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[37]Test. Issachar 3:8; 7:5-6.

"It would have been better," said he, "to give him nothing than so to give it that he was put to shame."[38] It in recorded in the Mishnah that the temple contained a hall devoted to the purpose of secret donations: money was deposited there in secret by pious donors for the honorable maintenance of poor persons, who were of good descent.[39] Similar institutions were established in other cities of Palestine.[40] To put money into the charity box, of which the overseers of the poor had charge, was considered to be the best form of almsgiving, because the donors and recipients were unknown to each other, so that there could be no feeling of patronage on one side nor of shame on the other.[41] A quaint story is related of a certain worthy of the Talmud, who hid himself in an oven, lest he should be recognized by a poor man, for whom he had deposited some money under the socket of the door.[42] "If you have lent money to a poor man" said a mediæval writer, "who wishes to repay the debt but cannot do so, turn aside if you see him approaching, lest he suppose that you are inwardly reproaching him for his indebtedness."[43] The relief loan, which still plays a large part in Jewish philanthropy, was highly commended by the Rabbis, because a poor man can accept it without loss of self-respect, and he will often apply for a second loan, although

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[38]Hagigah, 5a.
[39]Mishnah, Shekalim V, 6.
[40]Tosefta Shekalim II:16.
[41]Baba Bathra 10b.
[42]Kethuboth 67b.
[43]Sefer Hasidim 327.

he be ashamed to take a second gift.[44] In other cases, a poor man can best be assisted by those who buy his merchandise or give him employment.[45] "A loan is better than a gift," we read elsewhere, "but to take a poor man into partnership is the best of all"[46] There was a certain originality in the charitable methods of R. Jonah, who resorted to a species of pious and charitable fraud in order to spare the feelings of those whom he wished to benefit. When he saw a man of good family in reduced circumstances, he would pretend that the latter had inherited property in another town. "Accept this money," he would say, "and repay me in the future." When the proffered loan had been accepted, he would declare that it was intended as a gift, free and unconditional.[47]

I may here mention another rule of the Rabbis, which illustrates their delicacy of feeling in dealing with the unfortunate. What is to be done if a widow and an orphan present themselves to us for relief and we are unable to assist both? In such circumstances, the widow, according to the Talmud, has the first claim upon our assistance, for a man, rather than a woman, is accustomed to beg from door to door.[48] An interesting note on this passage is given by a Lithuanian Rabbi of the eighteenth century. In his time, women itinerant beggars were numerous; but he declared that the ancient

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[44]Kethuboth 67b, Sefer Hasidim 1034.
[45]Sefer Hasidim 1035.
[46]Shabbath 63a.
[47]T. J. Peah VIII, 9.
[48]Kethuboth 67a.

rule must still be observed, although the reason for it applied no longer.[49]

Long before the days of scientific philanthropy, the Jews were made aware that charity must be adequate. The Rabbis deduced this lesson from the words of Scripture, "Lend him *sufficient* for his need in that which he wanteth" (Deut. 15:8). "Thou must support the poor man," they taught, "but thou needest not enrich him. Yet thou must assist him to maintain himself on a scale appropriate to his condition, so that he is fed and clothed in his accustomed manner. He must even be provided, if it be necessary, with a horse to ride on and a servant to run before him."[50] On the other hand begging was discouraged. When an unknown applicant asked for alms, interim relief was given in the form of food, but he received no clothing until his case had been investigated.[51] The Rabbis lived in a more easy-going age than ours; they recommended that the traveling beggar should be given his customary small silver coin and no more, but that poor people of real need and desert should receive all they required.[52]

But how can the charitable be certain that their benefactions are well bestowed? At least since the age of Ecclesiasticus we have record of impostors: "Many have refused to lend for other men's ill dealing, fearing to be deceived." (Ecclesiasticus 29:7). The prototype of the rogues, who impose on the credulity of modern He-

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[49]Hachmath Haadam s. 145 (2).
[50]Sifre on Text, Tosefta Peah Ch. 4.
[51]Baba Bathra 9a.
[52]T. J. Peah VIII:7.

brew-Christian missions appears already in the Ecclesiastical history of Socrates (c 400). The latter tells the story of a Jew who, pretending to be a convert to Christianity, had been often baptised in different sects and had amassed a considerable fortune by the gifts he received on these occasions.[53] The Mishnah tells us of beggars who counterfeited physical deformities; they would pretend to be blind, lame or humpbacked. A beggar of Tiberias died whilst he was soliciting alms and it was discovered that he had a purse of gold in his possession.[54] The comments of the Rabbis on cases such as these are instructive. He that "pursues not after charity" is punished, they tell us, in that his gifts go to the undeserving.[55] This is a remark of permanent value. To avoid wasting our charity, we must take trouble about it.

'Happy is he,' (not who gives to the poor but) 'who considers the poor,' (Ps. 41:1) for he takes thought how he can best carry out the duty of showing benevolence.[56] Yet the Rabbis would not have us be oversuspicious. In cases of uncertainty, the poor man is to have the benefit of the doubt: "the giver gives and let the recipient bethink himself.'[57] A case is mentioned in which a man, suspected to be an impostor, proved not to be so. During his lifetime the world had mocked at him for accepting charity. After his death, it was discovered that he had given away to other poor men all that he had re-

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[53]Lecky, *History of European Morals,* (Vol. II p. 80 n.).
[54]T. J. Peah VIII:9.
[55]Baba Bathra 9b.
[56]T. J. Peah VIII: 9
[57]Op. cit. VIII:7. Cf. also the following dictum in the first chapter of the *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles* (an ancient

ceived.[58] "Be grateful to impostors" said one of the Rabbis. "If there were no impostors, every refusal of alms would be a flagrant sin."

The Rabbis are careful to advise us not to expect gratitude from those whom we benefit; indeed those who expect gratitude rob their good deeds of all grace and deserve no thanks. R. Eleazar b Pedath was once told on his return home that a company of wayfarers had been fed at his house and that they had prayed for him as a token of gratitude. 'I have no reward,' said he. On another occasion, he was informed that a similar company, after receiving entertainment had cursed him. 'Now, I have a good reward,' he said. The Rabbi in question was acting as an overseer of charity, and this task was then, as it always is, a thankless one. When the same post was offered to R. Akiba in an earlier age, he asked his wife whether he should accept it. 'Yes,' she said," on the clear understanding that you will be cursed and despised.[59] R. Akiba's administration of the office was certainly not lacking in vigor, for he levied heavy contributions upon men of means for the support of the poor.[60] But he obtained in full measure the only popularity worth having—that which comes unsought.

An important regulation about charity was made at Usha in the middle of the second century, probably at

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Jewish work, revised for Christian use): "Blessed be he that giveth according to the commandments for he is blameless, but he that had not need shall give account, wherefore he received and for what."

[58]Op. cit. VIII:9.

[59]T. J. Peah VIII:7.

[60]See Vayikra Rabbah Ch. 34.

the synod which was convened in this city of Galilee The period was critical. The persecution which followed the suppression of the Bar Coziba's rebellion was over, but its effects remained in the widespread misery that prevailed. To relieve this misery, it was decided that men should devote one-fifth of their possessions to charity. Yet characteristic moderation was observed. No further sacrifice was required from any one, nor was it even sanctioned. A certain R. Yeshebab desired to distribute amongst the poor all that he had, but he was not permitted to do so.[61] As a permanent law of Rabbinical Judaism, the regulation of Usha is only applied in this negative sense. Indeed, it is recorded in the Babylonian Talmud as a restraint on charity: "However liberal a man may be, he must not give away to the poor more than one fifth of his possessions."[62] This rule does not apply however to testamentary dispositions of property. Mar Ukba left half his fortune to charity, for he said: "My provision is scanty and the journey is long."[63] During a man's life-time, he was expected to devote a tithe of his income to charity—a liberal but not excessive proportion.

Another decree issued at Usha throws light upon our subject. It was enacted that children must be maintained by parents during their early years.[64] This order was necessitated by the great poverty of the time, for many parents were tempted to throw upon the community the burden of their children's maintenance. The Rabbis

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[61]T. J. Peah I:1.
[62]Kethuboth 50a.
[63]Kethuboth 67b.
[64]Kethuboth 49b.

took steps to prevent so grave a neglect of parental duty. By means of the law just cited and others of similar character, they made it clear that charity begins at home. A man's first duty is to maintain himself, his wife and his young children. If he can do anything further, he must support his grown-up children and his parents, should they be in need.[65] A mediæval writer expresses indignation at the conduct of a rich man, who gave a large sum of money in charity but left his own kinsmen to starve.[66] Charity to poor relatives comes before charity to strangers. It is also taught that local charities are entitled to our support in preference to those of another city.[67]

That Jewish charity went mainly to Jews was a matter of course. It was not, however, entirely limited to them. The only person absolutely excluded from assistance was the Jew, who transgressed the Law deliberately and impenitently.[68] "For the sake of peace," we read in the Mishnah, "the gentile poor are not prevented from sharing

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[65]A man's duty to himself is affirmed in R. Akiba's dictum: "Thine own life comes before thy neighbor's life" (Baba Metzia 62a). The duties of husband to wife receive elaborate consideration in the Talmud. The maintenance of children until their seventh year was an absolute obligation (Kethuboth 65b); after they reached this age, it was in theory within the father's discretion to refuse them support, but the ecclesiastical authorities put such pressure upon him that he could not exercise this discretion if he was in possession of means (See Commentary of Maimonides on Mishnah, Kethuboth IV:6) The passages from the Talmud, which deal with a son's obligation to support his father are collected in Tosafoth on Kiddushin 32a.

[66]Sefer Hasidim 324.

[67]Baba Metzia 71a.

[68]Gittin 47a.

in the gleanings of the harvest." On the same principle, they were given alms together with the Jewish poor, their sick were visited and their dead were buried.[69] These tolerant regulations probably date from the time of King Agrippa, under whom the Jews enjoyed the last period of happiness and of comparative freedom that was theirs before the destruction of the second temple. Josephus tells us of this good king that he was equally humane and liberal to all men, whether natives or foreigners.[70] During his reign, the Sanhedrin, under the direction of Gamaliel the elder, originated various laws for the promotion of social order and these may well have included regulations about charity, which embodied Agrippa's benevolent intentions towards foreigners.[71] During the Middle Ages, the Jews continued to behave charitably to non-Jews: "they do relieve all their own poor," wrote Leon of Modena (17th century), "and besides these they do upon all occasions help any object of charity, let him be what he will."[72] In some places, it was customary to give alms to gentiles on the feast of Purim.[73]

A rule, equally ancient in origin but opposite in tendency, is that which discourages the acceptance of charity from gentiles. When first made, it was directed against the use of tainted money. Just as the sacrifice

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[69]Gittin 59b and 61a.

[70]*Antiquities,* Book 19 Ch. 7.

[71]See Graetz, *Gesch. d Juden,* Vol. III p. 349, Weiss, Dor 1, 178

[72]*"History of the Present Jews Throughout the World,"* translated from Leon of Modena's Italian work by Simon Ockley (1707).

[73]Orach Chayim 694 (3).

of the wicked was an abomination, so were the contributions to charity of malefactors such as the farmers of taxes, whose whole wealth was based upon oppression and robbery.[74] Gifts for the support of the poor and for the maintenance of the temple must, in like manner, have always been accepted with reluctance, when they were offered by public enemies. They were at last declined. Josephus declares that it was 'the beginning of our war with the Romans' when the governor of the Temple persuaded those who officiated in the Divine Service to receive no gift or sacrifice from any foreigner.[75] This seems to have been the occasion for a stormy meeting, described in the Talmud, when "eighteen articles" were adopted by a majority of the Rabbis present, in accordance with the ideas of the school of Shammai.[76] According to the best opinion, these articles all restricted intercourse between Jew and gentile, an order to reject all gifts offered by the latter being included in the number. We read of a later objection, raised against the acceptance of charity from gentiles, in a remark of Rab Nahman, a Babylonian teacher of the fourth century. He describes those who accept such presents as persons "who eat something unmentionable" and declares their action to be profanation of the Divine Name.[77] The language is unseemly, but the view is an

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[74]Mishnah Baba Kama X:1.

[75]*Jewish War*, II:17.

[76]The leading passage is T. J. Shabbath I:4. I adopt Graetz's view as to the occasion and nature of the "'eighteen articles." See the Hebrew translation of his history (Vol. II, pp. 90-93) for a full discussion of the subject.

[77]Sanhedrin 26b.

intelligible one, for it rests upon the underlying idea that Jews bring discredit upon themselves and their religion when they fail to support their own poor. Hence a Jew is not permitted, according to Rabbinical law, to receive aid from a gentile except under stress of dire necessity. A grant made by a king to a Jewish congregation is, however, to be accepted as a matter of policy. His present should be passed on to the gentile poor, if it is possible to do so without deceiving the royal donor.[78] Yet the Talmud contains one fine appreciation at least, of the charity practiced by non-Jews. This is the well-known utterance of R. Johanan b Zakkai: "As a sin-offering makes atonement for Israel, so alms for the Gentiles.[79]

The teaching of the Rabbis was addressed not only to those who gave charity, but also to those who contemplated receiving it. The latter were urged to make every possible effort to retain their independence. "Make thy Sabbath as bare of all comfort as a week-day," said R. Akiba, "but do not become dependent on others."[80] Another Rabbi said to a learned colleague, "Flay an ox in the market and take thy wages; say not, I am a great man and the work is beneath my dignity."[81] "Blessed be the man who trusts in the Lord"—such a man is he who pinches himself that he may continue to be self-supporting. But the Rabbis recognized also that every virtue, even that of independence, may be carried to ex-

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[78]Baba Bathra 10b.
[79]l. c.
[80]Shabbath 118a.
[81]Baba Bathra 110a.

cess. Those who are incapacitated from work by age or disease must consent to take charity; if they refuse it, they are accounted as self-murderers.[82] Yet it is a bitter experience for honorable men to become dependent on the bounty of others. In a prayer, which certain sages of the Talmud recommended for daily use, the suppliant exclaims "Grant that we may not be obliged to ask the help of men, and let not our food be dependent on their bounty, for their gifts are small, but the shame they inflict is great."[83]

Weiss, in his history of Jewish tradition, points out how great was the development of laws, relating to almsgiving and benevolence, when Israel lived under the Romans. In his opinion, the Rabbis found it necessary to emphasize their people's duty towards the poor in order to counteract alien influences, which were calculated to corrupt the pristine Jewish virtues.[84] This theory as to the motive, which actuated the Rabbis, may or may not be correct; but their actual teaching speaks for itself. The ideal Israelite, as they pictured him, was merciful, modest, benevolent;[85] they exerted themselves to the utmost to convert this characterization into a reality. There are abundant proofs, some of which have been collected in these lectures, that their efforts were successful and that Jewish charity was habitual, warm-hearted and exemplary. Thus the claim that "Christianity for the first time made charity a rudimentary

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[82]End of Peah, Mishnah and T. J.
[83]T. J. Berachoth IV:2.
[84]Weiss, *Dor* II:24-26.
[85]Yebamoth 79a.

virtue" can only be admitted, in so far as it refers to the gentile world. The triumphs of Christian charity have been illustrious, but the church has achieved them by following in the footsteps of the Synagogue.

A wise benevolence has an eye for the future. It is not satisfied with palliatives for the relief of destitution; it desires to see destitution abolished. How far were the Rabbis alive to this requirement? Absolutely so in their dealings with individual cases of poverty. They were not satisfied with feeding the poor; their great ideal was not to allow man to be poor and they preferred, when it was possible, to help their struggling brethren to help themselves.[86] But the Rabbis (or at least a majority of them) had a wider vision still. Their hope was that of a good time to come in which poverty should be no more. In a well-known passage of the Talmud,[87] Mar Samuel declares that in the days of the Messiah Israel will be free from alien rule but the world's life will continue unchanged in other respects, for it is written that "the poor shall not cease from the land." He realizes that a world without poverty would be an earthly paradise; unfortunately, as he supposes, such a world will never be. More consonant with Jewish teaching, however, is that brighter view of the future, which is put forward by R. Johanan in the same passage: "All the promises of the prophets will be fulfilled in the days of the Messiah and not deferred until the next world; as to the joys of the hereafter, they have been revealed to no human eye." Thus the Messianic

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[86]See Schechter *Some Aspects of Rabbinic Theology*, p. 112.
[87]Berachoth 34b.

era is pictured as one of diffused prosperity and happiness. These material blessings form a fitting background for the spiritual graces of transfigured humanity in the golden age to be.

IV

JEWISH CHARITY IN THE MIDDLE AGES

It is a boast of the Jewish people that they support their own poor everywhere and always. In modern times this claim cannot be entirely substantiated. Jewish charities cover a wide field, but many services requisite for the relief of distress are no longer rendered on denominational lines. In the Middle Ages, on the other hand, Jewish communities throughout the world were set in an environment, indifferent at best and often actively hostile. "All Israelites," said Maimonides, "and those who have joined them are as brethren. To whom shall they lift up their eyes for help in times of need? Not to the gentiles who hate and persecute them, but to their own brethren."[1] The assistance required was supplied by individual benefactors, as well as by organized communal societies. It was not confined to the local poor; coreligionists arriving from other parts of the world also received their share. The sense of solidarity in Israel was strengthened by persecution, so prevalent in the Middle Ages and not extinct even today.

One of the chief forms of mediæval charity was the ransom of captives. Assistance of this character was

[1]Matnoth Aniyim, Ch. 10 s. 2.

already rendered in Bible times. "We after our ability," said Nehemiah, "have redeemed our brethren the Jews, who were sold to the heathen" (Neh. 5:8), that is to say, he had purchased the freedom of those whom he found to be working off debts in the service of non-Jews. So to act was considered as the fulfilment of a most sacred duty, for slavery is such a terrible calamity. "The sword is worse than natural death, for the sword disfigures; famine is worse than the sword, for famine tortures; captivity is the worst of all, for it may involve them all."[2] Money collected for other purposes, even for the building of the temple or the relief of the poor, might be appropriated for the ransom of captives. To delay this duty was not permitted lest loss of life should follow. Not that it was possible to save all Jews from slavery. "The prisoner unaided cannot deliver himself from the dungeon,"[3] says the Talmudic proverb; collective Israel was often too weak to rescue more than a stray few of the suffering children of Israel. Notably was this the case after the destruction of the temple by the Romans and after the suppression of Bar Coziba's rebellion. Such numbers of Jews, with their wives and children, were sold into slavery on both these occasions that they fetched very low prices: it seemed like a fulfilment of the prophecy, "Ye shall sell yourselves unto your enemies for bondmen and for bondwomen and no man shall buy you" (Deut. 28:68). Most of the victims had to resign themselves to their hard fate;

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[2]Baba Bathra 8b.
[3]Berachoth 5b.

but occasionally they received manumission from their masters and occasionally brothers in faith were enabled to purchase their liberty. When R. Joshua b Hananiah visited Rome, he heard that there was in prison a pretty Jewish boy, curly haired and open eyed. The Rabbi went to the gate of the prison and recited the question, taken from the book of Isaiah, "Who gave Jacob for a spoil and Israel to the robbers?" (Isaiah 42:24). The child immediately recognized and completed the quotation: "Did not the Lord? He against whom we have sinned, and in whose ways they would not walk, neither were they obedient to his law." Thereupon R. Joshua swore that he would redeem a child of such promise whatever might be the ransom required. He did so and the child grew up to be the renowned teacher, R. Ishmael b Elisha.[4] The very large ransom paid in this case was considered justifiable, because it procured the release of a promising scholar. Otherwise, no higher price might be paid for any captive than that which he would fetch, if sold in the slave-market. This restriction was made in the interests of the community, lest the kidnapping of Jewish captives might become too profitable a business. Similarly, Jewish captives might not be assisted to escape, lest the safety of other captives or of the whole community should be endangered. But these rules could hardly be maintained in practice. Jewish captives had often to be ransomed at any cost in the Middle Ages in order that they might be saved from death or mutilation. Curiously enough, in the leading case of refusal

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[4]Gittin 58a.

to pay excessive ransom, the restriction imposed by the Mishnah did not apply, for the victim was R. Meir of Rothenberg, the spiritual leader of the Jews of Germany in the thirteenth century. He performed a sublime act of self-abnegation and refused to imperil the freedom of other Rabbis by allowing his brethren to pay the Emperor Rudolph an exorbitant sum for his release. Thus this noble captive languished in custody for the rest of his life; but many another prisoner (sometimes an ignoble one) was ransomed. Meir Lublin, a Polish Rabbi of the sixteenth century, was asked whether the community should ransom a young man, who, having been arrested by the gentiles on the charge of intercourse with a harlot, was in danger of death or forced conversion. The Rabbi advised that this should be done, whatever might be the cost. The charge, in his opinion, was a mere pretext; even if it could be substantiated, the offense was not a capital one according to gentile law. The true purpose of the authorities was that of extracting money from the Jews of the locality and a refusal to pay in the case under consideration would be followed by other charges, still more dangerous to the community. If the young man were forced into apostasy he might be made to slander his brethren and there was no knowing how the matter might end.[5] This incident occurring at a time and place in which the Jews were comparatively well off is instructive as illustrating the wariness with which the Jews had to steer their way through the perils that constantly threatened them during the Middle Ages.

[5]Meir Lublin, Resp. 15.

The "ransom of captives" sometimes meant in practice the payment of money to procure the release of actual criminals. It was felt that they must be rescued from torture and the other barbarities, practiced in a mediæval dungeon. Thus Rabbi Jair Bachrach (seventeenth century) pleaded with his brethren to strive for the release of a certain "notorious Jewish thief," who was being punished with excessive severity. On the other hand, he goes on to say, no steps should be taken for the benefit of persons, convicted of making or wilfully circulating false coins, lest it be thought that this offense, practiced by a certain number of degenerate Jews, was condoned by the community. To purchase the pardon of a thief was not open to the same objection, "for there are thousands of thieves amongst Christians."[6] Meir Lublin discusses in one of his responsa the rare case of a Jewish murderer, whom the gentiles had taken into custody. He advised that no action should be taken to avert the infliction of a death penalty.[7] In the seventeenth century, we find the following fine pronouncement by a Lithuanian Rabbi: "I emphatically protest against the custom of our communal leaders of purchasing the freedom of Jewish criminals. Such a policy encourages crime among our people. I am especially troubled by the fact that, thanks to the clergy, such criminals may escape punishment by adopting Christianity. Mistaken piety impels our leaders to bribe the officials in order to prevent such conversions. We should endeavor to deprive criminals of opportunities to escape justice."[8]

[6]Quoted in Pithe Teshubah on Yoreh Deah 251 (2).
[7]Meir Lublin, Resp. 138.
[8]*Jewish Ency.* s. v. Lithuania.

Needless to say, most of the "captives" who required assistance, were not criminals but the victims of crime. There were many such throughout the Middle Ages, even at the best of times. Compared with the general population, many of the Jews were great travelers and the perils of travel were then great. To cross the Mediterranean was an adventure indeed, when pirates abounded and when certain ship-captains were capable of selling their own passengers into slavery. To purchase the freedom of kidnapped Jews, who were exposed for sale in a slave market was regarded as a plain duty by the local congregation. It was thus that the Jews of Cordova, towards the middle of the tenth century, procured the manumission of an unknown stranger and thus obtained the services of a distinguished Rabbi, who not only supervised the affairs of their own community but took the first decisive steps towards making Spain a centre of Talmudic study. But it was at times of acute persecution that the ransom of the captives was effected on the largest scale. Wide as the bounds of Jewish dispersion were the operations of Jewish charity; had this not been the case, Judaism would have been long extinct. Above all, the expulsion of the Jews from Spain spurred their brethren in other countries to make supreme efforts for their deliverance from death, slavery or forced conversion. Quite similar was the course of events in the middle of the seventeenth century, at the time of the Cossacks' invasion. Once again Israel suffered widespread destruction and once again brotherly love proved to be stronger than death. In the year 1648, three thousand Jews of Podolia, who had surrendered to the Tartars

of the Crimea in order to escape massacre, were ransomed by their brethren of Constantinople; and messengers were sent to Germany and Italy, in order that funds might be collected for the continuance of the work. The need was immense, for the sufferers were numbered by hundreds of thousands, but Jewish congregations in all parts of Europe and of northern Africa did their utmost to meet it. The Jews of Germany had themselves suffered through the ravages of the thirty years' war, but they responded nobly to the appeal of their brethren. In the year 1656, the members of the Leghorn community gave one-fourth of their incomes towards the ransom of captives and the relief of refugees from Poland. Thus the solidarity of Israel was nobly vindicated.[9]

Hospitality to strangers is the form of personal service, which is first recorded in the early pages of the Bible and there must have been opportunities to practice it in the most primitive conditions of society. The circumstances of Jewish history have always accentuated the importance of showing hospitality. The "'wandering Jew" has been and still is a typical figure. Sometimes he has been a traveling scholar, open eyed and impecunious; sometimes he has left his home in quest of a livelihood; sometimes he has been the victim of persecution, fleeing alone or in company with others to seek for an asylum in distant lands. Whatever were the circumstances of the mediæval wanderer, he seldom lacked good cheer in the homes of his coreligionists who believed that when the poor man stood at their gate, God

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[9]See Hebrew Graetz, VIII 153.

was on his right hand.[10] "Let thy house be opened wide," said R. Yose b Yohanan, a president of the Sanhedrin in the second century B. C., "and make the poor to be inmates of thy house."[11] Rab Huna, a wealthy Babylonian teacher of the third century, is said to have opened the doors of his house before every meal, and to have made proclamation, "whosoever is hungry, let him come and eat."[12] A general invitation to all and sundry was considered to be particularly appropriate on the Passover evening and Rab Huna's greeting to the hungry is still recited at the beginning of the domestic service for that occasion. But it has long been impracticable to keep open house. This is already noted by Rab Mattithiah, head of one of the Babylonian academies (c 861). "Our fathers," he said, "were accustomed to leave their doors open, so that any poor Jew might enter, but nowadays most of our neighbors are gentiles. We therefore provide the brethren with Passover relief before the festival begins, lest they be forced to beg at our doors, and we continue to repeat the words, which custom has consecrated,[13]

The food which a man gives to the poor at his own table is declared in the Talmud to be the equivalent of an offering presented on the altar.[14] This being so, it was held that our hospitality like the sacrifices of ancient days, should be given from our best. We must feed

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[10]Leviticus Rabbah Ch. 34.
[11]Aboth I:5.
[12]Taanith 20b.
[13]Quoted by Abudarham in his commentary on the Haggadah.
[14]Hagigah 27a.

the hungry with the sweetest dishes on our table and clothe the naked with our most beautiful coverings.[15] The manner in which hospitality was shown was also considered to be of great importance.[16] Guests should be received with a pleasant countenance; food should be handed to them at once for they may be ashamed to ask. Although the host feel sad he should beam on his guests. Let him not tell them his troubles, lest they suspect that he is displeased to see them. He must try to make them feel that his only cause for regret is in being unable to give more. After entertaining them with the best fare at his disposal, he should provide them with a comfortable bed, for good rest gives more satisfaction than good food itself. Moreover he should escort them on their way, when they depart, and he should give them provision for the next stage of their journey. This last lesson is deduced by the Talmud from the declaration which was to be made by the elders of the city, nearest to the scene of an undiscovered murder. "Our hands," said they, "have not shed the blood and our eyes have not seen it" (Deut. 21:7). "Who would suppose that the elders of the city had shed blood? The meaning is however that they have allowed no stranger to depart unprovided with food and with escort for the journey."[17]

Guests were warned that they must not abuse the hospitality of their host. The professional diner out was

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[15]Yoreh Deah 248 (8), following Maimonides.

[16]The rules for hospitality which I mention are those collected in the Menorath Ha-Maor by Isaac Aboab (c. 1300).

[17]Sotah 46b.

condemned.[18] The guest who brought another guest with him was regarded as the meanest of mankind.[19] Those who entered the house of another man were to comply with all his requests.[20] They must do nothing to cause annoyance to him or to their fellow guests. They must accept his hospitality heartily and gratefully; at the end of the meal they must pray for his welfare.[21] Some Jewish rules of etiquette for the guidance of guests resemble those which obtain in Arab society. In both cases, for example, the guest is recommended to leave something on his plate as evidence that he has had enough and more than enough.[22]

When the number of wayfarers who required shelter in a town was such as to overtax the resources of private hospitality, the deficiency was supplied by organized charity. It was the practice of Jewish communities to make grants to impecunious strangers in cash or in kind and besides this they usually provided a guest house or Jews' Inn for the reception of friendless travelers. Lodging places of wayfaring men existed so early that legend attributed their institution to Abraham.[23] Gratuitous public inns are mentioned in the Talmud, but they became more numerous in the Middle Ages, when a guest house was commonly provided at the cost of the community in order to provide for travelers for whom pri-

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[18]Cf. Ecclesiasticus 29:23-28, Pesachim 49a.

[19]Derech Eretz zuta ch. 8, Baba Bathra 98b.

[20]Derech Eretz Rabbah Ch. 6.

[21]Berachoth 46a, 58a.

[22]Derech Eretz Rabbah Ch. 6. Cf. Hastings; *Dictionary of the Bible.* s. v. Hospitality.

[23]Sotah 10a.

vate entertainment was lacking. In other cases the community paid ordinary Jewish inn-keepers for the board and lodging of such travelers.[24]

Hospitality extended to students of the Law was regarded as especially meritorious. Hence centres of Jewish learning were also notable centres of hospitality. The wandering student was met with everywhere, for it was an accepted principle that those who learned the Law from one master could never attain to eminence.[25] At a time when books were few, it was necessary to seek for guidance from many living voices. As Christian students were attracted from all parts of Europe to the mediæval universities, so did budding Jewish scholars flock to the celebrated academies of Rabbinical learning. Some of them suffered great privations, as did Rashi, who left his newly married wife and betook himself to the sages of Lorraine, under whom he studied "with lack of bread and raiment and with a millstone round his neck." Sometimes, however, external conditions of Jewish life were more favorable and students received generous maintenance, until their studies were completed. At Lunel in the twelfth century, the students that came from distant towns to learn the Law were taught, boarded, lodged and clothed by the congregation. In a neighboring town R. Abraham b David founded an Academy for the use of all comers and, being a rich man, he paid the expenses of those who were without means.[26]

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[24]Israel Abrahams, *Jewish Life in the Middle Ages*, pp. 74, 314.

[25]Abodah Zarah 19a.

[26]See *Itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela*, edited by Marcus Adler, pp. 3-4.

In the fifteenth century "bahurim" (young students of the Talmud) were generally lodged in a hostel provided for their reception, the cost being defrayed by voluntary contributions. A little later, the centre of Jewish learning shifted from Germany to Poland. Before the time of the Cossacks' invasions, the Rabbinical academies (*Yeshiboth*) of Poland were fairly prosperous. "Nearly all communities in Poland supported a *Yeshibah.* They maintained the students and gave them out of the public funds fixed sums weekly for ordinary expenses. * * * A community consisting of fifty householders supported about thirty students. In addition to receiving fixed stipends the students were invited as guests to the table of the community, every household having invariably one or more such guests from the *Yeshibah.*"[27] In the middle of the seventeenth century evil days set in for the Jews of Poland and their houses of study, which never fully regained their former prestige.[28] Yet they have continued to attract numerous students who have, with admirable enthusiasm for knowledge, scorned delights and lived laborious days. Admirable also has been, and still is, the generosity shown to the *Yeshiboth* and their students by the lovers of Jewish learning, themselves in many cases poor men and women.

Another form of personal service, upon which the Rabbis laid great stress, is the visitation of the sick in

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[27] *Yewen Mezulah,* by Nathan Hanover, as rendered in *Jewish Ency.* s. v. Yeshibah.

[28] The Yeshibah of Volozhin founded in 1803 was pre-eminent among the Yeshiboth of its time, but it was after all a splendid survival.

their homes. The sight of a friend's face, say the Rabbis, removes one-sixtieth part of a disease. R. Akiba once went to see one of his pupils who was lying sick and unvisited. "O my teacher," said the sick man, "thou hast saved my life."[29] Those who visited the sufferer, beside cheering him, joined with him in a prayer for his recovery. If the call was paid on a Sabbath day they would say, "On this day we may not utter words of prayer that cause grief. Yet healing will quickly come, for God's mercy is great. Enjoy therefore the Sabbath rest in peace."[30]

Sick travellers were accommodated in the general hostels for strangers, to which allusion has already been made. When the Christian matron Fabiola in the fourth century founded at Rome, as an act of penance, the first public hospital, she adapted a Jewish institution to more general use. Special houses for the sick were found occasionally during the Middle Ages in Jewish communities.[31] The first of such hospitals of which record remains was established at Cologne in the eleventh century. As we approach modern times, we begin to hear of such institutions as the Beth Holim of London (founded in 1747), which was at once a home for the aged and a hospital for the sick. The material needs of those who lay sick within their own homes likewise received attention. Many Jewish doctors gave gratuitous treatment to such as could not afford to pay their usual fees.

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[29]Nedarim 39b and 40a.

[30]Shabbath 12b.

[31]*Jewish Ency.* (III 670) s. v. Charity; see articles also on Hospital, Hekdesh.

Societies for supplying the poor in their sickness with medicine and warm clothing existed in many centres of Jewish life.

At the beginning of the apocryphal book of Tobit, we read of a pious deed, performed by the hero of the story. On a certain occasion at the feast of Pentecost, he sent his son to invite a poor man who should share in his family celebration. The son returned saying that "one of our nation was strangled and cast out in the market-place." Tobit immediately left his meat and buried the corpse. The passage is very characteristic of Jewish thought, for the Rabbis considered it to be a religious duty of the highest importance to bury a dead body which was found untended. Even the High Priest who might not defile himself by touching the corpse of his nearest relative must perform this act of piety. One story given of R. Akiba's initiation as a student of the Law represents him as carrying to the nearest burial place a corpse, which he found by the roadside. He then reported the matter to the Rabbis, who told him that he had acted sinfully, because a dead body, that lies outside the borders of a city, must be buried at the spot where it is found. Then said R. Akiba, 'if I incurred guilt when I thought to act meritoriously, how much more must I do so when I have no virtuous intention.'[32] From that time he never ceased, we are told, to attend upon the sages, for he understood that piety was impossible without knowledge. Thus Rabbinical Judaism taught its followers to carry out their duty to the living and the dead with a

[32]T. J. Nazir VI:1.

combination of inward reverence and outward punctiliousness. It was finely taught that the burial of the dead is an act of true charity, because those upon whom it is bestowed can give no recompense.[33] It was also a good feature about Jewish funerals of the old traditional type that they were unostentatious. This fact was already noted by Josephus. "Our law," he writes, "has also taken care of the decent burial of the dead, but without any extravagant expenses for their funerals and without the erection of any illustrious monuments for them."[34] The rich and poor after their death should be treated alike and various funeral customs mentioned in the Talmud were based on this principle. Thus all dead bodies were buried in simple linen garments, and the same kind of bier was used for both rich and poor.[35] Nor were elaborate sepulchres encouraged by the Rabbis. 'The righteous need no monuments," said R. Simeon b Gamaliel, (second century) "their words will keep their memory green.[36] Fulsome epitaphs did not come into fashion until the later middle ages; monuments that commemorate the ostentation of those who erected them have existed here and there at various periods, but it was only in modern times that they became a glaring offense against good taste. In such external matters, at least, we do not show so much regard for the feelings of the poor, as did our fathers.

In Jewish communities of the old school, societies

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[33]Rashi on Gen. 47:29, based on Midrash Tanchuma.
[34]Josephus, *Against Apion* II:27.
[35]Moed Katan 27b.
[36]T. J. Shekalim II:7.

were and still are organized to tend the dying and bury the dead. From the seventeenth century if not earlier, they were known as "holy leagues." The members recited psalms and other prayers at the bedside of the dying; they watched the corpse,which must not be left unattended before its interment; they washed the dead body, clothed it in a shroud and deposited it in the coffin; they attended the funeral and comforted the mourners. In some cities the "holy league" supplied the bereaved family with food and money during the seven days of mourning.[37]

Those who adopt orphan children and bring them up until their marriage are highly commended in the Talmud, because they are doing charity at all times, that is, they perform a continuous act of benevolence.[38] During the Middle Ages, it seems always to have been possible to find foster-parents for destitute orphan children. Orphanages were not founded until the latter part of the eighteenth century. The provision of dowries for poor girls, especially those who were orphans, was a favorite form of charity; at Rome (and doubtless elsewhere) curious customs existed in connection with it. Thus jewelry was sometimes lent to those brides who had none. The recipients of dowries were often selected by lot. This endowment of poor maidens was not usually a

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[37]See Hachmath Ha-adam 163 (5). The provision of meals during the week of mourning sometimes led to abuse. When given by the rich to the rich, they were liable to become feasts of gluttony. It would be much better, said an ethical teacher of the 17th century, to give money for the upkeep of houses of study. *Meil tsedakah* 1467.

[38]Ketuboth 50a in allusion to Ps. 106:3.

charge upon communal funds, but was undertaken by societies, organized for the purpose. The institution of such societies began at latest in the thirteenth century and they afterwards became an important feature in Jewish life. "There are in great cities," wrote Leon of Modena (17th century) "fraternities or companies for works of charity" amongst which the writer includes the care of the sick, the burial of the dead, almsgiving, redeeming of slaves, marrying maids. A number of other services were fulfilled by similar bodies. We read, for example, of societies for clothing the poor, for giving festival relief and for lending books.[39] The collection of money for distribution in the Holy Land was also supervised by special committees in nearly all the principal towns.[40]

Special charitable societies came into existance to supplement the relief which had been dispensed since the time of the Mishnah by the Jewish community itself, through its authorized executive officers. These overseers of the poor obtained a part of their funds from compulsory levies upon the well-to-do, a distraint being levied upon the property of defaulters.[41] The fines imposed upon offenders against congregational regulations were also added to the Charity fund; while damages,

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[39]This was considered a very good form of charity. When a man devoted a tithe of his income to charity he might purchase with a part of the money Hebrew books to be lent to students. If so he should write on the fly-leaf that they are bought from the tithe, so that his heirs may know how to use them (Ture Zahab on Yoreh Deah, s. 249).

[40]See *Jewish Ency.* s. v. Halukkah.

[41]Yoreh Deah, s. 248.

awarded to a complainant for the injuries which he had sustained, were often devoted to the same good purpose.[42] Similarly we read of payments to the charity fund that were exacted by a society of pietists from any of their members who interrupted the studies of others by idle talk or who came late to Synagogue without a reasonable excuse.[43] But the larger part of the resources commanded by the overseers of the poor were derived from voluntary contributions. All, except the poor, were expected to give a tithe of their income in charity.[44] The poor and the orphan were recommended as an act of grace, to give whatever they could afford. When new clothes were given to a poor man he was not forced to hand over his old ones to the collectors of charity, but it was held that he might well do so.[45] Collectors of Charity accepted small sums only from slaves, children and women, lest any of these dependent persons should be tempted to give money to which they themselves had no right. The collectors were also warned that they must not take advantage of those who were known to be exceptionally generous.[46]

It was customary to make offerings to charity during public worship and large sums were obtained by this means. On week-days, the money given was put into the poor box. To make such contributions on fast days was especially commendable: "the reward of fasting is char-

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[42]Op. cit. 258 (9).
[43]Sefer Hasidim 965.
[44]Matnoth Aniyim VII:5.
[45]Yoreh Deah 253 (8).
[46]Op. cit. 248 (7).

ity," by means of which the poor man, who is faint because of his pious abstinence, is provided with food at night-fall.[47] On Sabbaths and festivals no Jew might carry money with him, but his donations to charity were publicly announced in the Synagogue. Those who were called up to the reading of the Law paid for the privilege by their generosity to the poor. Various members of the synagogue bought by auction the right to perform certain ceremonies, such as that of wrapping the scroll of the Law in its vestments after the lesson had been read from it. Gifts to charity were announced when there was a wedding in the family of a congregant, or when a child was born to him. Memorial offerings for the dead were made on the anniversaries of their decease, as well as on the High Festivals.[48] Legacies to the overseers of the poor for the maintenance of their work were also com mon; in some places it was customary for rich persons to make large bequests of this nature. A typical case is recorded where the trustees of an orphan were directed by his late father to give alms every year to the poor from his estate on the feast of Hanuccah.[49]

The overseers of the poor in the time of the Mishnah, organized two forms of public charity, one for casual relief, the other for regular relief. The former of these consisted of relief in kind, which was distributed alike to the resident poor and to strangers, who were provided

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[47]Beracloth 6b, Yoreh Deah 256 (2).

[48]The main authority for the statements in this paragraph is Or Zarua I:26. See also Orach Hayim 147, Sifthe Kohen on Yoreh Deah 256.

[49]See Moses Isserlein on Yoreh Deah 258 (5) also Ture Zahab on passage.

with bed and with two meals, one to eat on the spot, and the other to take away with them. Those who remained in the town over Sabbath, received three meals for the day. This kind of assistance, as dispensed by the overseers of the poor, was already falling into disuse in the time of Maimonides, for it was superseded by private charity, by the provision of communal hostelries, and by the benevolent activity of the special societies already referred to.[50] Weekly distributions from the Kuppah or charity fund to the resident poor continued, however, to be a permanent feature of Jewish life throughout the Middle Ages. The Talmud did not permit a scholar to reside in a city, where systematic assistance to the poor was not given,[51] and Maimonides declared that so far as he knew, this duty was not neglected by any Jewish community. This organized charity relieved the indigent Jew from the necessity of soliciting alms in person. In the seventeenth century, however, the position changed for the worse. Poverty then increased and the poor box was not so well lined. Besides, the Jews lived together in their ghettos like the members of one large family and they could beg from one another without being exposed to the unfavorable notice of the outside public. Hence we find that the poor became accustomed to beg assistance from private persons as well as from the communal officials. Leon of Modena describes the practice of his own day in the following passage (the quaintness of which may be partly due to his English translator): "In great towns, on Fridays and the eves of other great festi-

[50] See Abrahams, *Jewish Life in the Middle Ages*, p. 311.
[51] Sanhedrin 17b.

val, the poor go about to rich men's houses and others of the middle sort to gather their alms, and they give to everyone something according to their ability. Besides the *Parnasim* or *Memunnim*,[52] whose office is to look after such things, take care to send them something home to their houses every week, especially to such as have lived in good credit, or are modest and ashamed to beg, or sick persons, or widows who do not go abroad." In special cases, collections for individuals were taken in the synagogue.

The problem also, presented by the itinerant beggar, became more insistent towards the end of the Middle Ages. The cause is not far to seek. Restrictions on trade and on the practice of handicrafts, expulsions from city after city and from whole countries, confiscations of goods, cruel massacres—all the forms of persecution, to which the Jews were subject, had done their work only too effectively. The bulk of the Jewish population, especially in central Europe, became terribly poor, not only in resources but also in industrial capabilities. The evil reached its height after the Cossacks invaded Poland. A large proportion of the Polish Jews were reduced to indigence by the war and there were among them many students of the Talmud, who, unable to make a living by secular pursuits, emigrated year after year to the South and West of Europe in order to turn their knowledge to account. Some of them were distinguished Talmudists and had the good fortune to obtain favor from congregations of more or less importance, who required Rabbis.

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[52] i. e., the Wardens or members of the Executive.

But many worthy men and others not so worthy, who could not find such openings, had to be satisfied with less eligible employments, such as that of teaching Hebrew to children for a mere pittance. Others again led a wandering life, earning their bread either by hawking or by various expedients reputable or disreputable. They became itinerant preachers or cantors; they acted as marriage-brokers, bringing news of well-dowered maidens in distant towns; they attended weddings as professional jesters; they cast out spirits and wrote amulets. Some became mere beggars (*Schnorrers*); who went from place to place with plausible stories, on the strength of which they asked for help. They would represent themselves as fugitives from persecution; as victims of a conflagration or of a miscarrage of justice, as rich men who had lost their fortune, or as scholars who had lost their memory through a visitation of Heaven. How were the stories to be tested? This question had been already considered by the Jewish authorities of former times. Thus the Jewish Council of Lithuania in 1623, when dealing with the situation that arose through the arrival of refugees from Germany during the thirty years' war, decided that beggars should receive no assistance except to leave the country, unless they brought a recommendation from the Rabbi of their native place.[53] This rule afterwards prevailed generally and it was applied to the refugees from Poland. To quote again the words of Leon of Modena: "If a poor man has any pressing necessity, which exceeds the abilities of the town where he lives, he makes ap-

[53]See Hebrew Graetz, Vol. VIII, p. 107 n.

plication to the principal Rabbis, who set their hands to a certificate that he is an honest man and one that deserves their charity and desires that every one would give him assistance. Into whatsoever place he comes with this paper, where there are any Jews, be it hamlet, castle or any little place, he is entertained a day or two with meat, drink and lodging and some money given him at parting. When he comes into any larger city, he gets his certificate confirmed by the subscriptions of the Rabbis that dwell there; and he goes to the synagogues * * * and he receives assistance." But written testimonials constituted, after all, a very imperfect safeguard against deception. They might have been given by a Rabbi, who wished to escape the importunity of an applicant, of whom he really knew nothing or next to nothing. It was notorious that the literary schnorrer, whose stock-in-trade was one of his own worthless compositions, could nearly always produce some testimonals from well-known Rabbis, in which he was commended as a paragon of learning. And worse still, the benevolent had to reckon with impostors, who made use of spurious testimonials. This abuse was stated by R. Moses Hagiz (1671-1750) to have become very common. After praising "our brethren from Poland," who had spread the knowledge of the Torah far and wide, he lamented that in his own generation so many of them, who appealed for help to the Jews of other lands, came with lying tales and forged letters.[54] Let us not forget, however, that the delinquents were after all more sinned against than sinning. They

[54]Mishnath Hachamim 15a.

lived at a time when Jewish impoverishment had reached its climax. They often sailed under false colors, but their sufferings were real enough. Nor is it entirely irrelevant to note that the moral decline of the period was checked during the eighteenth century, by the religious movements, brought about both by the Hasidim and by their distinguished opponent the Wilna Gaon.

The stream of emigration from Russia and Poland, when once begun, never afterwards ceased; indeed, its pace has been greatly accelerated in modern times. Many of the emigrants have possessed great power of adaptibility to circumstances and have become successful business men. Others have applied the sharpness of intellect, which they derived originally from their Talmudic studies, to secular learning with brilliant results. But there has always remained a residuum of failures, for whom charity is called upon to make provision. Jewish charitable societies in many lands have made gallant efforts to relieve, cure and prevent destitution. But much remains to be done.

One thought must always suggest itself to us, when we study, however superficially, any important aspect of our past history. The marvel of Jewish life in the Middle Ages is that, while there were so many circumstances that tended to degrade our fathers, they were in fact so little degraded. The influence of Judaism on heart and head carried them through their difficulties to a triumphant issue.

V

JEWISH SOCIAL SERVICE OF TODAY

The social service of our day is, of course, a theme not for a lecture but for an encyclopedia. Turn over the pages of the Charities' Register, issued in a great city, and you will be struck not only by the number of societies enumerated and by the large amount of their combined expenditure but also by the variety of functions which they discharge. This is an age of specialization in charitable effort as in everything else. Every possible variety of good work is attempted with more or less success either by a society founded for that single purpose or by the appropriate department of a more comprehensive organization. The ramifications of medical charities, educational charities and charities for general relief are highly complicated; to understand the working of all this machinery of social uplift requires special study and critically to examine it would entail a very difficult investigation. But there are some aspects of Jewish social service to which I should like to invite attention. Certain outstanding problems confront us now; it is my aim to indicate what they are rather than to suggest final solutions.

The title of my paper suggests at once a general question of importance. How far should Jewish social service be conducted on denominational lines? It may

indeed be assumed without demur that Jews owe a special duty to their co-religionists. Such a proposition would be affirmed with virtual unanimity in any assembly either of Jews or of non-Jews. A charitable agency, therefore, which carries on work in a Jewish district, should attract generous Jewish support, both in the form of subscriptions and in that of personal service. But it has yet to be determined how far social service should be rendered to Jews by organizations distinct from those that benefit non-Jews. Is the Jewish child to receive education or vocational training in a denominational school? Is the sick Jew to be treated in a Jewish hospital? Should the activity of settlements be organized upon a denominational basis?[1] These and similar questions arise from time to time in various parts of the Jewish world and are apt to be hotly debated. In order to decide them aright, account must be taken of local circumstances, but we should also be guided by broad principles of general application.

If we are persons of wide sympathy, our bias will undoubtedly be towards the undenominational idea, so

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[1]This question may perhaps be answered in a foot-note. Some of the best known university settlements are situated in Jewish districts and our co-religionists make large use of the recreative and educational facilities they offer. There is hearty co-operation between Jews and non-Jews in the conduct of the work. The activity of settlements is pursued in an atmosphere of friendliness, which helps to dissipate prejudices of class and sect. Denominational settlements can hardly promote the same breadth of view, but they justify their existence as separate entities, if they put their religious work in the forefront. No attempt to run a Jewish settlement on merely racial lines deserves support; it must be enthusiastically religious or it is nothing.

far as it can be effectively applied. In order that a society, organized by Jews for Jews, may justify its existence, it must do work which could not be thoroughly accomplished by an undenominational body. Societies in which the teaching of Judaism plays an essential part, not to speak of such as are dedicated entirely to this purpose, satisfy this condition. Frankly denominational as they are, they constitute Judaism's first line of defense and have the highest claim upon all who love their faith. On the other hand, the instruction of Jewish children in secular subjects is best conducted in undenominational schools. This view prevails generally in countries of enlightenment; the complete segregation of Jewish children in separate schools would hardly find support in modern times, except from Anti-Semites. The existence of Jewish elementary schools in England is explained by the fact that the English system of public education before 1870 rested upon a denominational basis, which has been largely maintained by subsequent legislation. The existing Jewish schools justify themselves by their efficiency, but no new ones have been added for many years. The majority of Jewish children in England now attend schools, "provided" by the County and City Councils; such instruction in Hebrew and religion as they receive is given after school hours. There is little doubt that the "non-provided" schools which still exist, will ultimately be absorbed in the general system, for their distinctive character is assailed by the more progressive elements in English public life.

In ordinary circumstances, children are best cared for in their homes; the most valuable elements in a child's religious education are supplied by its parents, although religious instruction (a very different thing) may be delegated to others. But this principle sometimes breaks down. It breaks down in the case of many children, whose fathers are chronic invalids or whose mothers have been left as destitute widows. What is to be done for these poor little ones? One way out of the difficulty is to give the head of the family a maintenance grant, that will adequately cover the needs of all its members. If sufficient funds are obtainable, this is the best way to deal with the case of parents, whose energy and common sense will enable them to bring up their children really well. But destitution sometimes so discourages men and women that they are incapacitated from the efficient performance of parental duties. In such cases, the interest of the child is the primary consideration; he should be transferred to the charge of a public body or charitable society, which assumes, for a time at least, all parental responsibilities, including the duty of providing moral and religious education. When this transference has to be made, Jewish children should, of course, be entrusted to Jewish care. The duty of providing orphan asylums has accordingly been recognized by Jewish communities in many lands. The spirit in which these institutions are conducted, is in accord with the ideal, formulated by Baruch Auerbach, the founder of the Jewish Orphan Asylum at Berlin. "Orphans," he said, "are not merely poor children,

but children without parents; to raise and bring them up, an orphan asylum should give these children not merely bread and a shelter but parental love also, and practical training"[2] Neither of these last two requirements is easy to fulfil; but without them an Orphan School is worse than useless. Technical or vocational work forms therefore an important part of the curriculum; the success in after life of most lads trained at such institutions as the Jews' Orphan Asylum of London, speaks well for the efficiency of this practical training. To provide an equivalent of the love, given by natural parents, is impossible, but everything should be done to make orphan children breathe the atmosphere of affection which makes a home happy. A staff of earnest and devoted teachers can do much to meet this want, but it is also important that the conditions of their work should be as favorable as possible. The barrack-school with its large dormitories and dining-halls is now condemned both on theoretical grounds and as the result of practical experience. Small orphanages may be retained to satisfy the needs of the less populous cities, but the larger institutions will require to be remodelled. This has already been done with remarkable success by the Hebrew Sheltering Guardians of New York. Their orphanage has been removed from the city to a quiet rural district, where small parties of children are housed in a number of separate cottages each under the personal care of a house-mother. The best features of Jewish home life

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[2] *Jewish Ency.*, s. v. Auerbach, Baruch.

are present in this institution, which is probably destined to serve as the model for many others.

Another difficult problem, with which Jewish charity is called upon to deal, is that presented by the child, who is a delinquent or the offspring of vicious parents. Once there were very few such children in Israel, but their number, like that of adult criminals and prostitutes, has greatly increased during the last twenty-five years.[3] They are mostly committed to non-Jewish institutions, being visited at longer or shorter intervals by friendly visitors, lay or clerical, from whom they receive religious instruction. But this arrangement is not satisfactory. If we would save children, whose moral development has been marred by vicious or incompetent parents, we dare not neglect the most potent influence at our command,—the influence of religion. We go far towards solving the problem of the delinquent child, if we arouse the dormant potentialities of his moral nature. The best hope for him is in a religious school, but it must be one where religion is not only taught but also lived. This implies the need of a teaching staff of unusual ability and religious zeal. Teachers, possessing these qualities and having at the same time a desire to take up institutional work, are not easy to obtain, but the main desideratum is to

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[3]Various causes have brought about this sad state of things. Among the forces of demoralization, we may probably reckon the growth of the factory system in Jewish industries and the consequent neglect of the home, the peculiar temptations of modern industrial life, and not least, the unsettlement in morals, due to wholesale emigration and to the break-up of orthodoxy.

secure the right person as superintendent. If this responsible post be well filled, the training of a good official staff is only a matter of time. Another point to be kept in mind with regard to correctional establishments is the need of proper classification. Truants and boys who are merely troublesome at home or at school, should not be sent to institutions, intended for the reception of more hardened offenders. We may spread moral disease in our attempt to cure it, if we neglect this simple precaution.

My remarks about the proper treatment of the delinquent child apply equally to the so-called "fallen" girl. Here again the need of proper classification is urgent and here again the best results will be obtained in denominational institutions, if they are rightly conducted. The Jewess, who succumbs to temptation, needs Jewish teaching and she needs also Jewish sympathy—the sympathy of those who understand her peculiar difficulties and the unwholesome surroundings, to which her delinquency can generally be traced. Further, Jews should undertake the after-care of those who leave the Rescue Home and should hold themselves responsible for preventive work, designed to cleanse the community from the disgrace of commercialized vice. The grave evil just mentioned so far as it affects the Jewish people, is largely international in its operation, many of the victims being conveyed to foreign lands. The combined force of Jewish agencies in different parts of the world can alone save them from destruction. Very impressive is the annual report of the Jewish Association for the Protection of Girls and

Women, in which we read of the joint efforts put forth by this British Society and by the *Hilfsverein der Deutschen Juden,* the French Committee, the American Council of Jewish Women, the Jewish Colonial Association and a number of other Jewish organizations in different countries. The brotherhood and sisterhood of Israel have combined in a strenuous effort to wipe out a stain which besmirches the honor of our race.

We conclude therefore that every well-ordered Jewish community should provide itself with orphanages, correctional schools and rescue homes, which are specifically Jewish, in order that they may be made centres of direct religious teaching and influence. Homes for friendless Jewish work-girls also form an indispensable part of the communal equipment. There are other institutions in which the management should be Jewish, in order that the atmosphere may be Jewish. I have especially in mind Homes for the Aged and the Incurable. It is essential for the happiness of the inmates that they should spend their declining years in a Jewish environment, to which most of them have been accustomed all their life. The question of food is also important. The majority of working-class Jews, including persons otherwise unobservant, adhere to the dietary laws as a praiseworthy custom if not as a religious obligation. They prefer to eat kosher meat, if it can be obtained without much trouble. This pious feeling (this prejudice, if you prefer to call it so) increases with age and should certainly be respected. Still more weight must be given to the convictions of an earnest minority, who look upon the Dietary Laws

as divine.[4] The attraction of Jewish cookery, which can be enjoyed in a communal institution, must also not be forgotten. The familiar old-time dishes appeal not only to the palate but also to the imagination.

What are we to say about the Jewish hospitals, which are to be found in many parts of the world, notably in Germany and in the United States? Speaking in the abstract, one would be inclined to regret their existence. The fight against disease is a matter of common concern and should be carried on with the closest co-operation of all men. A practical lesson in brotherly love is supplied by such an institution as the London Hospital, where men and women of all creeds are to be found amongst the governors, the subscribers, the medical staff, the nurses and the patients. Undoubtedly also the highest efficiency is obtainable when the location of hospitals and their classification are determined by medical requirements only, without regard to the denominational affiliations of the patients. This point is especially clear in a city of moderate size, where the choice lies between a single institution, large enough to attract a staff of first-rate ability, and several denominational institutions too small to attain excellence. Certain general arguments are used in

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[4]We should treat with especial tenderness the feelings of intellectual non-combatants, whose faith might possibly be shattered but could not be remodelled. It is a cause for regret that in America kosher meat is not supplied in a number of Jewish hospitals, including most of those with the largest resources at their command. All the requirements of orthodoxy are, however, satisfied at the Montefiore Home for Chronic Invalids—a New York Institution, which is one of the best equipped of Jewish medical charities.

favor of Jewish hospitals, but they fail to carry conviction. The desire of Jewish patients for special food and religious ministrations can be met within the walls of an undenominational hospital. Where such patients are numerous they can be collected into special wards. Even where they are few, it should be possible to arrange for the establishment of a kosher kitchen and for the regular visitation of the institution by a local Rabbi. Jewish patients of foreign speech are subject to serious disqualifications in some non-Jewish hospitals, but good feeling and a little good sense can easily solve the difficulty. In a country, such as England, where the system of medical charities is essentially undenominational, there is no justification for the existence of separate Jewish hospitals and the general sense of the community will probably continue hostile to their establishment.[5] In the United States, different conditions prevail. Most of the voluntary hospitals are under denominational management or, at least, have a distinctly denominational atmosphere. The sick and injured of all creeds and nationalities are admissible,[6] but Jewish patients in non-Jewish hospitals are apt to feel that they are out of place. Municipal hospitals to which many Jews resort by force of necessity, are as little liked as the

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[5]The only existing Jewish Hospital in England is at Manchester. A site for a Jewish Hospital has been purchased in London; the movement for establishing it is popular in the East End and has a few influential supporters. The *Jewish Chronicle* is in favor of the project.

[6]Jewish hospitals, in their turn, receive patients of other creeds.

English poor-law infirmaries, which they resemble in many ways. It is natural, therefore, that American Jews, like the Roman Catholics, the Presbyterians and other churches, should provide for the needs of their own sick. It is also a fact that the best training for a Jewish doctor and the best opportunities for his professional advancement are furnished by Jewish hospitals, which serve, therefore, more purposes than one and are becoming more and more numerous. They include establishments of every degree of efficiency and inefficiency, two or three of the largest being model establishments of world-wide renown. The average level is said to be a high one, for a Jewish community is accustomed to make it a point of honor that their hospital should be at least as well found as any in the city. The existence of Jewish hospitals in America is probably justified as a means of protection against social prejudice. Later on, they will doubtless become an anachronism, if only because the provision of hospitals is destined to become a branch of the public service in all civilized lands.

I have as yet said nothing about the most important Jewish charities,—those that give direct relief. These societies, although sectional, should not, I think, be regarded as denominational, for they are concerned with Jews as members, not of a religious community, but of a race. The subscribers, the active workers, the honorary officers of these societies are in many cases Jews by descent but not by birth: the impulse that makes them support Jewish charities may be called religious—using the word in a broad sense—but

it is certainly not denominational. The scrutiny of a subscription list supplies, no doubt, an insufficient basis on which to found conclusions as to the aims and methods of a society. The social work of the Salvation Army, for example, is ancillary to its spiritual activities, although it obtains financial support from all and sundry. But not so with the modern representative charities that relieve Jewish distress. The closer we examine them, the more we are struck with their secular outlook. Those who apply to them for assistance gain nothing by making professions of piety. It is a matter of indifference to the agents of such bodies as the Jewish Board of Guardians in London, whether or not their "clients" attend synagogue or observe the Jewish ritual laws.[7] Acceptance of assistance from Christian missions is the only offense against Judaism, which is still penalized and then only in aggravated cases where there have been systematic deception and double-dealing. In the matter of Sabbath observance, the policy of the Board tends to increase, rather than to lessen, the prevailing laxity. No special consideration would be given, I think, to an applicant whose need arose from refusal to work on the

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[7]It was not always so. Unobservant Jews used to forfeit all claims for assistance (See p. 79 above). Even in 1831, the *Comité de Bienfaisance* of Paris rejected as unseemly (*inconvenant*) the offer of a certain M. Fould, a banker, to give twenty-five loads of wood for distribution during the winter months, "five of which were to be reserved for heads of families, whose children worked at a trade, and especially for those who worked on Saturdays as on other days." (Kahn *"Histoire de la Communauté Israelite de Paris, Le Comité de Bienfaisance* p. 24.)

Sabbath. Some of the Board's activity actually fosters Sabbath-breaking. Their wise efforts to promote Jewish dispersion from congested districts have this tendency and the same may be said of their apprenticeship work, which withdraws lads from trades distinctively Jewish. It is true that the apprentices are not permitted to work on the Sabbath, but most of them do so after the expiration of their indentures. This result may be regretted by some of the Board's members and subscribers, but they make no serious effort to prevent it.

The secular outlook of modern Jewish charity is perhaps illustrated by the exclusion of the clergy from the membership of the Jewish Board of Guardians in London by an 'unwritten rule'—a rule rigidly maintained for many years, although there is one recent exception.[8] Another cause for this exclusion is the belief that the training and experience of the clergy, as well as the atmosphere in which they live, tend to make them unbusinesslike. This belief is partly due to lay prejudice, but there is some truth in it. And it is a great pity. The modern synagogue need not directly organize social service,—it should not do so, I think,—but it will be false to its mission, unless it inspire social service. Nor is it sufficient for the teacher of religion to preach social service; he

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[8]This practice does not obtain in the smaller English communities, where the Board of Guardians has no paid staff and the minister acts as a general servant to the congregation. It is to be found in some of the larger provincial centres but not in all. At Leeds, the Jewish minister plays the chief part in the administration of charity.

must qualify himself to practise it and to show others how they are to do so. It is true that we do not want all our Rabbis to be of the same type. The scholarly minister, who is an authority in Jewish learning, and the clerical educational expert are both essential figures. But most of the working Rabbis, who will serve the congregations of the not distant future, will be above everything social workers and inspirers of social work. The training which they receive in their student days must be planned accordingly.[9] It would also be advantageous if most Rabbis, before assuming the charge of a congregation undertook settlement work for a year or so, or were employed in the office of a Jewish charitable or educational society. They would thus be enabled to gain a grasp of affairs, that would stand them in good stead throughout their ministry.

It is highly desirable that Rabbis should co-operate in charitable work. At the same time, the organization of Jewish relief has rightly been entrusted to agencies, independent of the synagogue.[10] The best thought of the day outside the Jewish community as within it does not favor the administration of relief

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[9]A candidate for the title of Rabbi, should be required to complete satisfactorily one of several alternative courses in addition to obtaining a competent elementary knowledge of the Hebrew language and of Jewish history, literature and theology. If he specializes in a branch or in branches of sociology, the instruction in this subject as given in his University should be supplemented by special tuition in a Rabbinical college, in the principles and technique of Jewish social service.

[10]In a German city, however, the *Armen-Commission der Jüdischen Gemeinde* consists of delegates from the local congregations.

through the churches. The clergyman, as social worker, will render the best service, when he co-operates with the members of a society over whom he can claim no authority except that derived from the confidence, which his single-minded zeal and ability inspire. However great his knowledge, skill and fairness may be in dealing with problems of destitution, he should not be constituted as an administrator of relief *ex-officio*. If he acts in this capacity with an authority derived from his office, it is almost inevitable that a false idea of religion wll acquire currency. It will be supposed, especially by the uneducated, that preference is given to those applicants for relief, who attend worship and make professions of piety. Once this idea is abroad, bad results cannot but follow. The house of God will become the resort of plausible humbugs. Worse still, the prevailing opinion amongst persons of sturdy independence, who should be the best friends of religious bodies, will grow hostile to them. The modern synagogue is almost entirely free from these evil conditions, which still disfigure many of the modern churches. Such conformity with Jewish ceremonial observance, as survives amongst laymen in the countries of enlightenment, is disinterested, for the appearance of piety has long ceased to be profitable. The would-be beneficiary of organized Jewish charity is offered no inducement to play the part of a religious hypocrite.

The representative Jewish relief agencies are, I repeat, essentially undenominational. Yet they are Jewish, that is, administered by Jews for the benefit of

their fellow-Jews. It is necessary for us to maintain special societies of this character—shall I not say because we are a peculiar people? It is at least certain that a Jewish applicant for relief in an American or English city is a very different person from most gentile applicants. He is generally a native of a Russian, Austrian or Roumanian ghetto.[11] If not a recent arrival, his physical or mental condition is probably such that he is below the average, reached by most of his co-religionists, in ability to adapt himself to a new environment; otherwise he would have made himself independent of charity. And he often has withal something of the spirit of the wanderer. Having few local attachments, he is willing to try his luck anywhere. He may speak no language but Yiddish, he may appear to be the most helpless creature imaginable; yet he will transfer his fortunes upon slight inducement from London to Paris, to New York, to Cape Town, to Buenos Ayres. Hence Jewish charities have to deal every day with problems that are much less characteristic of the gentile world,— the problem of the deserted wife, the problem of the destitute traveller, who is not a tramp but a home-seeker. Again, Jewish charities are called upon to assist a large number of refugees, some of whom have left Eastern Europe without being taught a trade, whilst others have to apply their knowledge of a handicraft to the methods of

[11] In the fiscal year ending September 30, 1913, there were 6498 applicants for relief to the United Hebrew Charities of New York. Of these, only 174 were native Americans. Native applicants to the London Jewish Board of Guardians during 1913, were 492, the total number of applicants being 3592.

practising it that prevails in another country, or, if this be impossible, to seek a new avocation. To help them to become self-supporting, there is scope for much specialized ability.

The utility of Jewish societies for dealing with Jewish poverty does not merely depend upon the peculiar features of their work. It depends also upon the fact that there is more mutual understanding between Jew and Jew than between Jew and Christian, unless the Christian is a person of exceptional gifts. There is not much chance of helping a man, unless you can gain his confidence, for you must induce him to tell you just where the trouble lies so that you may be enabled to discuss with him possible remedies. But it is one of the disagreeable facts about organized charity that it breeds an atmosphere of suspicion. The would-be recipient is tempted to represent his plight in the most dismal colors, whilst the agents of the relief society are keen to detect imposture or exaggeration. It is especially difficult to dispel this mutual suspicion, when one is dealing with Jewish cases. The Jewish immigrant has been bred in a hard school; he has been harried and harassed all his life by petty official and by populace; he has learned to surround himself with a protective armor of deception and mistrust as a mere measure of self-defense. He is genuinely amiable and courteous, much more so indeed than the average English workman. If a stranger visits a gentile home in East London, the interview will probably begin and end in the street; if he visits a foreign Jew he will be at once

invited indoors and the best chair will be dusted for his reception. This friendliness is quite genuine but it does not prevent the foreign Jew from distrusting the gentile, to whom, in turn, his aim and morals, with their queer combination of meannesses and ideal aspirations, must always remain something of a puzzle Non-Jewish charitable societies (apart from those connected with missionary efforts) are always glad to refer Jewish cases to the communal agencies, that are better able to deal with them.

But here an attentive reader of my paper may perhaps be disposed to interpolate two pertinent questions. If the foreign Jew distrusts the Gentile, has he more confidence in those who appear to value their English, German or American citizenship more than their Judaism? Do the latter understand him and his requirements? We can answer both these questions in the affirmative, but not without considerable qualifications. The foreign Jew has much in common with his native brother. His children, if not he, are the raw material out of which the Jew with western culture is to be made; he himself usually looks forward to the process with satisfaction; he has considerable admiration and respect for the finished article. And if we are asked for proof that the native Jews of Western countries feel practical sympathy for their immigrant brethren, we point instinctively to the splendid charities, designed for the advancement of the Hebrew race, to which so much money, so much thought, so much devoted personal service are given. The main burden of supporting these charities rests everywhere,

it is true, upon the shoulders of a public-spirited minority and many, who are in a position to help, stand ignobly aloof. But this is a drawback to which all voluntary endeavor is subject. When all deductions have been made, it is safe to say that the representative Israelite, whose word carries weight in the professional or business world, is usually a man who gives his money, his time, or both to serve the poor of his people. Of course his motive is not always the highest. He may subscribe to a charity, in which he is not greatly interested, because he has received an appeal from some one whom he cannot well refuse. Or he may be a social climber, who pays his shot for the privilege of sitting on a Committee, in company with those whom he would not meet elsewhere. But it would require the folly of a professional cynic to make us suppose that such motives are often the dominant ones. If present at all, they are subordinate; whilst most of those who support Jewish charities have no selfish purpose to serve. Their good will towards their people is absolutely genuine.

Yet native Jew and foreign-born Jew do not cooperate as they should in charitable work. Foreign Jews, who make a fortune, may or may not support Jewish charities. Much more numerous are those who obtain a fair measure of success, after they have settled for a few years in their new home, but retain their old ideas and methods of living. They are mostly charitable people, yet they include but few supporters of the chief communal institutions, which they regard as tainted with too much officialdom, with too

many refusals of assistance, with an excess of "scientific" charity and a deficiency of *rachamanuth* (tenderness of heart). Accurate criticism this is not, but its utterance is natural, so long as the administrators of Jewish charity neglect to take counsel with the larger section of the community—that section to which belong not only most applicants for help but also a large proportion of those immigrants, who are hard-working, self-supporting and in some cases prosperous. If the co-operation of such men were secured, the public opinion of the community with regard to charitable administration would become better informed. Many good results would obviously follow. Inefficient and superfluous societies would disappear, or they would be reconstituted as local branches of the organized machinery of communal charity. The schnorrer[12] and the begging-letter writer would cease to find encouragement. The moral authority of Jewish charities would be far greater than it is now, for their policy would no longer be that which the rich enforce upon the poor, but it would be backed by the best mind of all sections in Israel. This is the surest way to give permanence to social work. It is not enough to help people wisely; we must either help them in accordance with their wishes, or convince them that wisdom lies in our ideas and not in theirs. In other words, it is necessary to apply democratic principles to charitable administration. Now our existing Jewish institutions are far from being democratically managed. "The bell

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[12]See p. 107.

has become the symbol of the Jewish Board of Guardians," wrote the London correspondent of a New York Yiddish newspaper[13]—the bell, rung by an official to notify an applicant that his interview with the Committee is at an end and that he must leave the office without further ado. The bell does not reason, it passes judgment: such is the typical attitude of a plutocracy, benevolent and intelligent, but imperious towards its dependents, when they are inclined to kick over the traces. That which seems the shortest way of arriving at the goal desired, may prove the longest in the end: it is better to govern with the good will of the governed, even although it is necessary to educate them first. I have no scheme to suggest whereby these generalities may be translated into action. It seems clear, however, that the governing bodies of our charities should gradually be made representative of all sections of the community. In dealing with Metropolitan relief problems, the best results will perhaps be obtained by the establishment of local committees, to which a central Board will delegate some of its powers. Tentative steps in this direction should certainly be made.

In many cases, charity is unable to remove the causes of distress and can only mitigate its effects by the application of palliatives. Some difficult questions of principle arise in this branch of Jewish charitable administration. The honest workman, left destitute by old age or by a breakdown in health, should

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[13] "*Die Wahrheit*," September 8, 1913.

be honorably pensioned either by his late employer, by a charitable society, or by the State. If worthy of help at all, he is worthy of adequate help, so that he may live in reasonable comfort with the members of his family. On the other hand the character, method of life and past record of many applicants for relief are such, that no charitable society is disposed to spend much upon them. The problem of their maintenance is not to be solved by doles; it must be undertaken by the State on an entirely different basis. But communal charity hardly tries to carry out these principles. In too many cases, it can spare but insufficient help for the deserving poor, who are permanently disabled, because a portion of its resources have been dissipated in casual relief to the unhelpable. Unfortunately it has become a dogma of Judaism that Jews always support their own poor. In point of fact, they do not and cannot support them completely. Various communal societies receive subsidies from public funds, and many Jews are inmates of municipal institutions. Above all, the extent of Jewish destitution is such, that no private societies could adequately cover the entire field. This patent fact would be more generally recognized and the cruel kindness of giving inadequate relief would be discontinued, were it not for the fear of arousing anti-Jewish prejudice. We must learn to take the world into our confidence; that is the braver and wiser course.

The most encouraging feature of modern Jewish charity is the attention given to remedial measures, old and new, and to preventive work, which pro-

vides a cure for social evils before the emergency for dealing with these evils actually presents itself. I wish I could have found statistics, showing how often a little timely help given to a family, struggling with sickness or misfortune, has made them self-supporting thereafter. Cases of the kind are certainly of frequent occurrence. Jewish promoters of charity are also mindful of the old Rabbinic principle that a loan is often better than a gift. Loan departments are attached to some of the larger communal institutions and similar work is carried out by separate societies, organized for the purpose. Money is lent without interest for business purposes, a responsible surety or sureties being required. The loan is repaid in weekly instalments. The remarkable feature of this work is that the proportion of bad debts is very small, although the borrowers are, of course, poor people. In the case of the Hebrew Free Loan (*Gemilath Chasodim*) Society of New York, the proportion of irrecoverables is about 3/5 of 1 per cent, out of $632,000 lent during the last financial year. Jewish agencies for granting philanthropic loans are generally successful because the need which they meet is widely felt. The ambition of most Jews is to start in business for themselves, so that they may work for profits and not for wages. In many cases, a timely loan will launch them on their career.[14]

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[14]For the sake of completeness, mention should be made of the loans without surety that are granted by the Relief Committee of the Jewish Board of Guardians of London, in addition to the advances made by their Loan Committee. The repayment of these relief loans is not enforced and very little

Manful efforts have been made by Jewish charity in recent years to fight against tuberculosis, less prevalent amongst Jews than amongst the general population, yet terribly destructive. It has long been known that the disease was arrested by removal to a purer and dryer atmosphere, but the work of a sanatorium was long ineffective, because the patient relapsed so rapidly after his return to the old bad conditions. On the other hand, emigration, which gives the consumptive his best chance of recovery, is generally impracticable. Much good can be effected, however, by the after-care of consumptives in their own homes, so that the patients themselves and the members of their families, who may be predisposed to the disease, are enabled to live under good conditions. In New York, a joint Committee of the United Hebrew Charities and of the Free Synagogue is applying this treatment in a number of cases. Striking results have been already obtained. "A careful investigation made by the Committee, of 495 cases of persons discharged from Bedford Sanitarium, showed that 55 per cent suffered a relapse within a short time after their discharge and a return to their former environment. Of the families cared for by the Joint Committee only 8 per cent relapsed into their former condition." In London,

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is recovered. (In the Board's annual reports, the amount repaid is not stated, although we can probably deduce it from the figures given.) These loans seem often to be offered with the purpose of stimulating the semi-schnorrer to self-reliance; failure to repay the loan is a bar to future relief, except in the case of sickness or other emergency. Relief loans are also granted by the United Hebrew Charities of New York and the proportion of repayments is much larger.

where similar methods are employed, about one fourth of the total expenditure of the Relief Committee of the Board of Guardians is now used for the benefit of consumptives and their families.

Another splendid branch of remedial work, in which the American Jews have achieved remarkable success, is that undertaken by the National Desertion Bureau. The great evil of wife desertion, which is the sorest blot of Jewish home life, has been greatly reduced and will in time become uncommon. These results have been made possible, because the abandonment of a child has now been made a felony in most or all of the United States; offenders, when located, are subject to inter-state extradition and are prosecuted by the District-Attorney. But this bare statement gives very little idea of the far-reaching and varied character of the work effected. Offenders are traced with great ingenuity and success; reconciliations between husband and wife are arranged whenever possible; in other cases, the husband is induced to agree to sign an agreement for a voluntary separation with due provision for his wife and children. In more extreme cases, where prosecution is necessary, sentence is suspended upon a promise to contribute a specified amount for the support of the family.[15] Similar work should be attempted in Europe, although the same degree of success could hardly be hoped for. I suggest to the Board of Deputies of British Jews that they

[15]The work is fully described in the Report of the National Conference of Jewish Charities in the United States, held at Cleveland in 1912.

might well take up the subject, in its legal and international aspects.

The most important problems of Jewish preventive philanthropy in the United States are probably those connected with immigration. The new arrivals are so numerous and usually so untaught. They face serious dangers and temptations; in order to succeed, they must learn to accommodate themselves to an unfamiliar environment. When they arrive, they must be assisted to find their friends; they must be given all necessary information to save them from falling into bad hands; they must receive, when necessary, a temporary shelter and assistance in finding employment. Amongst the difficulties to be overcome, not the least perplexing are those which arise from a "new phenomenon in the history of the world, that of the migrating, unattached young girl travelling alone, * * * breaking or loosening ties of family temporarily or permamently, detaching herself from all that was familiar and going out into the world."[16] All this work is undertaken with remarkable originality, sympathy and business ability by the Hebrew Sheltering and Immigrant Aid Society, by the Council of Jewish Women, and by the Clara de Hirsch Home for Immigrant Girls.

Almost equally important are the operations of the Industrial Removal Office (financed by the Jewish Colonial Association), which deals with applicants, who wish to leave New York for interior cities. This work

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[16]Proceeding of the *Sixth Triennial Convention of the Council of Jewish Women* (1911): Executive Secretary's Report, p. 76.

requires great delicacy of handling. The highly competent workman who can shift for himself, does not require assistance. On the other hand, it is worse than useless to send away those who are too incompetent to achieve economic independence anywhere. The persons dealt with have been unsuccessful in New York through force of circumstances, but it is judged that they are capable of doing better elsewhere. They are carefully selected and sent to communities, that express willingness to receive them. In 1913, 6469 persons were sent away, mostly to the central States. The direct results achieved are admirable, but the indirect influence of the work is probably more important still. "A case in point is that of certain city in Indiana, which ten years ago had a Jewish population of not more than thirty families all of German origin. To-day a conservative estimate places the number at one thousand. The Removal Office has not sent more than one-third of that number"[17]

Much might be added about the devices adopted in America to prevent abuses, that commonly arise in charitable administration. The recent establishment in New York of the Social Service Exchange, in which Jewish bodies participate, deserves especial mention.[18] Every charitable society of importance in

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[17] *The Removal Work, Including Galveston,* by David M. Bressler, presented before the "National Conference of Jewish Charities" (1910). An interesting experiment, on the same lines as those indicated above, was undertaken in England on a small scale, under the auspices of the late Lord Swaythling

[18] Similar Exchanges exist in some other cities notably at Boston. At Berlin, elaborate precautions are taken to prevent overlapping.

the city now furnishes this central exchange with a list of all the cases which it relieves. Overlapping is thus reduced to a minimum; it is even avoided as between Jewish charities and the principal missions for promoting Christianity amongst the Jews. Very important also is the work of the Transportation Committee of the National Conference of Jewish Charities. The different communities throughout the United States have undertaken not to forward an applicant for transportation from one city to another without the advice and consent of the city of destination. When this rule is violated, the initial city indemnifies the city of destination for any expense incurred. When disputes arise between different cities, they are referred for settlement to the Transportation Committee. It is a system which should be adopted in other countries.

In the Jewish world there are many other forms of charitable work. It is not within the scope of this paper to name them all, far less to describe them. It is clear, however, that the whole subject is one for comparative study. Jewish social service would everywhere be more efficient if we knew accurately how it was rendered by our brethren in other lands. The subject should be treated extensively and also intensively. Very valuable would be a descriptive and critical survey of world-wide Jewish charity, in which the broad aspects of the subject were alone considered. This work should be accompanied or perhaps preceded by a series of monographs, each devoted to a single branch of Jewish charity and based upon thorough in-

vestigation of the work, which is carried out by existing institutions. The preparation of such volumes would involve considerable expense, but this could easily be met, if it represented, as is fitting, the combined effort of universal Israel. In order to supply the initial impetus, an international congress on Jewish social service should be convened. I venture to think that such an assembly would serve this purpose and many others. Its published proceedings would form in themselves a document of unique value. The constitution of the Congress would furnish an inspiring object-lesson in the vital strength of Jewish solidarity; for it might be made thoroughly representative of our race. The Zionist and the anti-Zionist, the orthodox and reformer would have an opportunity to exchange ideas upon topics of common concern. They would disperse, after the congress was over, with a clearer realization of work to be shared in their people's cause.

VI

THE CITY OF GOD

"They shall call thee the city of the Lord, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel." So prophesied one of those seers, whose collected works are known to us as the book of Isaiah. There was, of course, no novelty in the idea that Jerusalem was a sacred city. It was the city, wherein the temple had once stood,—the city of sacred memories. The theme of the prophet is not, however, the past glory of Jerusalem, but its future transfiguration. According to his thought, the City of God is the new Jerusalem, the ideal city yet to be. To the carnal eye, it might look like the actual city of to-day, but the eye of the spirit will see in it a marvellous change. The officers of the city will be peace and its exactors righteousness. Violence and destruction will no longer be heard therein; its walls shall be called salvation and its gates, praise. "The light that never was on sea and land" will glow on the faces of the citizens. They will all be righteous and the sun of God's presence will shine within their hearts. Vain dreams of national ascendancy pass also through the prophet's mind, but these obscure only slightly the brightness of his vision—a vision which can be realized in its essentials not only in his own Jerusalem but in any spot on God's earth, where evil is overcome by virtue.

This is a beautiful picture, but many would deny that it is more. Amuse yourselves with these dreams, they would say, as you would seek distraction in a romance, but forget them during your workaday hours. But this is bad advice; it is unpractical as well, although it comes from those who consider themselves practical people. All the world's best achievement springs from idealism, of which we cannot have too much, provided it faces the facts of existence. The day-dreamer will not help us much, it is true, for he lacks concentration and remains out of touch with the world of reality. The serviceable idealist not only dreams dreams but tries to realize them. His is a virile idealism, that is allied to close thought. He takes account of the forces that retard progress as well as of those that promote it. But being a man of faith, he is confident that the obstructions confronting the forward march of humanity are not insurmountable; there is a way through to the light which can and must be won. Such idealism will get things done, that are beyond the ken of those, who have ceased to hope and work for better things. In science, in business, in politics, in all the traffic of life, it is the man of genius with a vision, who achieves the big results. It is good for ordinary people, who are far from being men and women of genius, to remember this. None of us is altogether incapable of generous vision. If we cultivate this faculty, we shall exact from life the highest possibilities, which it has to offer us; we shall do our work better, and certainly we shall enjoy it more.

It may further be pointed out that two kinds of

idealism are required for the building up of the City of God. There is the idealism of the practical man, engaged in clearing away the next two or three visible obstructions to progress in some department of beneficial activity. Such idealism belongs, for example, to the statesman or captain of industry, who combines practical sagacity and knowledge of affairs with generous enthusiasm and belief in the possibilities of human nature. It is needed, in a lesser degree, by the rank and file of humanity; otherwise the appeal made to them by their leaders will call forth no worthy response. In a democratic state, in particular, it is essential that there should be a common stock of vitalizing ideas, that bear upon present-day problems. Few are the masters who are capable of originating these great thoughts, but many will become disciples of the masters, if their minds are convinced, their imaginations fired, their hearts touched. We need therefore a second kind of idealist, whose strength does not lie in administrative ability but in his insight into ultimate realities. He does not tell us how to do things, (or if he does he generally tells us wrong) but we learn from him what things are worth doing and he inspires us with longing to see them accomplished. Be he poet, creative thinker, tribune of the people, prophet,—he moves his generation and may continue to move posterity "to sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not." Thus he does the world a great service, possibly the greatest of all, for the possession of an ideal is a necessary condition for all true progress. Our life lacks unity of purpose, unless we have a vision

of the far-distant time when the perfect life for the individual and for the human race shall at last be realized.

Now observe that the place on which the hopes of the prophet were set is a city. In this respect, his words come closer home to us, for the whole tendency, for good or evil, of our civilization is to encourage urban life at the expense of rural life. "The progress of mankind," said Canon Barnett, "is from an ideal garden to an ideal city, from Eden to the City of God." True that the rapid growth of most cities in modern times has been attended by many patent evils, both material and spiritual; true that it has given rise to social problems of peculiar difficulty. None the less, life in cities has been at once an essential condition and an inevitable result of modern progress; throughout the civilized world the town population is growing and the rural population tends to diminish, actually or relatively. This tendency towards concentration may be in part a passing phase; increased facilities of rapid locomotion may enable us to live, or at least to sleep, amid country sights. At the same time, the city will doubtless continue to be the centre of human progress. It is part of the divine plan that this should be so. Cowper's thought that "God made the country and man made the town" is superficial at best. We smile when we read the words of Socrates, who said that in the city he could learn from men, but the fields and the trees could teach him nothing. The error of caring for nature to the exclusion of mankind is quite as gross. Wordsworth who called himself "a wor-

shipper of nature unwearied in that service" learned that he could best appreciate the beauties of sounding cataract and lonely stream when he discerned behind them "the still sad music of humanity."

Let us prize our cities, therefore, and try to make them holy places. Would that we could feel for them even a fraction of that affection which made the inhabitants of Jerusalem exclaim, "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, may my right hand forget its cunning!" Such passionate love will best supply a motive for high endeavor, so that we may help to make the place we live in a worthy home for its teeming masses.

What then can we do to make our city a better place? Many things, but first and foremost we can perform the duties that lie nearest to hand. The ordinary work of daily life must be performed strenuously and honorably. The prosperity of a city depends upon the vigor with which the inhabitants apply themselves to their various avocations. Through the example which we set to our neighbors, we can, each of us, do something to raise or lower the moral standard that prevails. The spirit of sober work is inspiring; the man who holds rigidly to his engagements "who swears to his own hurt yet changes not," will brace up the moral tone of his neighbors. On the other hand, the example of trickery and of wild speculation is sadly infectious. In these days of keen competition, there is a real danger that rigid standards of business ethics may go out of fashion. The struggling trader, in attempting to keep his head above water, is sadly tempted to imitate some of the tricky methods employed with apparent

success by his less scrupulous rivals. Nor are the tactics of "big business" always above suspicion. It does not generally pay to break the law, but its terms may often be evaded. The manufacturer, working under a contract, will subject himself to penalties, if he fails to supply goods according to specification, but it may be that he can earn many a dishonest penny by lowering the quality of work or material, whilst adhering to the letter of the bargain. In the long run, such devices defeat their own object; profits are made but "repeat" orders are lost. But in some cases an immediate splash is all-important, whatever may happen afterwards. Or again bargains, not secured by a binding instrument, are dishonorably repudiated, if the turn of the market has rendered them unremunerative. Such malpractices as these destroy that mutual confidence between man and man, which is the breath of life to a commercial community; when employed in export transactions, they are unpatriotic as well as dishonorable, for the culprits injure their country's credit abroad. Public opinion, emphatic and universal, will suppress all such dishonorable trading in the City of God. We must likewise strive our utmost to raise the standard of knowledge, taste and morality in contemporary society, so that the sale of useless trash be discontinued, as well as the abuses, mendacities and wastefulness, that are common in many forms of advertising. In time to come, the law will suppress much traffic of this description, as it already forbids the sale of food products, that are adulterated or injurious to health. Meanwhile, each of us can do something to

foster the growth of a sane public sentiment, which will regard it as infamous to deal in quack medicine, in tawdry finery, designed to tempt the working girl to foolish extravagance, in painted shoddy, that counterfeits broadcloth in the tailor's show-room and goes to pieces on the first rainy day of wear. In the city of God, merchandise will be made for use and not merely for sale. Men will cease to be hirelings; they will learn to appreciate that work well done is sacred and that it is the primary manifestation of good citizenship.

Another thought. The City of God is the city of homes. Home, like the heaven which it should resemble, may be defined as a state of mind rather than a mere place. It stands for family affection, for the prattling of merry children, for intercourse with friends; it stands also for fellowship with our books, for quiet thought, for refreshment of spirit. Darby and Joan should be hospitable so far as their means allow and an occasional evening's diversion at a play, a concert, or a friend's house will do them a world of good. But gadabouts they will not be; if their wedded life is worthy of the name, most of their leisure will be spent together at home. And opportunities for solitude are also advisable. It *is* good for man to be alone now and then—and for woman also—provided the loneliness be sweet-tempered and not too prolonged. But solitude is a luxury beyond the reach of most people, especially in great cities where rents are so heavy. Home life in a tenement house is assuredly home life under difficulties. What is a com-

mon result? The wife is often left behind to look after small children, whilst her husband spends his evenings elsewhere, sometimes in doubtful surroundings. School boys and school girls are at play in the streets, where they are exposed to many bad influences. When they become a little older, they parade the brightly lighted thoroughfares, they are to be found in dancing halls, at the "movies"—anywhere, to escape from the close atmosphere and confined surroundings of the home. Boys' and girls' Clubs, evening schools, public libraries, settlement houses, all do their best to attract these wandering spirits, but only with partial success, and, in any case, the harmonious development of character requires home influence besides that exerted by outside institutions. I have said that home is a state of mind; but it must be remembered that states of mind are affected by external conditions. The home life of a city will not be satisfactory, unless the people be well housed. I will not discuss how this is to be brought about, whether by the erection of municipal buildings, by increased facilities of cheap and rapid transit, by the removal of factories to the suburbs, or by the creation of garden cities. But assuredly all religious agencies must preach the doctrine of divine discontent with bad housing conditions as with all forms of evil. We must not assume that any abuse is inevitable; let us rather bestir ourselves to get rid of it.

Poverty is not the only enemy of home life, nor the worst. Dissatisfaction with quiet surroundings, love of glare and glitter, restless pursuit of pleasure and

excitement are not confined to any single section of society, but they claim most victims from the well-to-do, who can afford to gratify the caprice of every moment. The worst enemy of home-life is self-indulgence, which prevents marriages, renders them unfruitful, and destroys conjugal affection. Nor do I refer only to the grosser forms of self-indulgence, to which the gambler, the drunkard or the libertine resorts. Respectable self-indulgence is almost equally anti-social. The stability of the home and its very existence are in jeopardy because of the high standard of comfort, which modern men and women are taught to regard as their due. The bachelor and the bachelor girl often refuse to submit to the loss of freedom, which marriage involves and to the still greater restrictions upon their comfort, which the sweet burden of children imposes. Hence results the present underfertility of Western nations, which constitutes so grave a menace to our civilization. Many palliatives have been proposed, but there is no real remedy, except in the growth of better ideals. We must learn to set a higher value upon home life and upon the duty we owe to our race and to humanity. This truth was realized in Jewish households of old; it must be taught anew if the City of God is to come into being.

Amongst the noblest triumphs of modern times are those achieved in the fight against disease. Advance in medical science has placed many powerful weapons of precision in the hand of our physicians. Sufferers from acute and dangerous diseases, however poor they

may be, receive skilled attention in hospitals, splendidly equipped and staffed. Still more far-reaching perhaps is the increased regard for sanitation, through which disease is prevented. The great cities of the world have been provided with good water supplies, that not only satisfy present-day needs but also anticipate the requirements of posterity. Laws have been passed for the prevention of sanitary defects in workshops and dwellings, for the removal of house refuse, for the abatement of overcrowding. Building regulations have been devised to diminish the risk of fire and of accident and to prevent the occupation of tenements, where sunlight cannot penetrate. The sale of unsound meat, of decayed fruit, of cakes made with rotten eggs, of milk adulterated with water or doctored with preservatives, has been made an offense against the law. These and similar measures not only bring about material improvement, but they constitute a moral advance. It is true that mixed motives have been operative and that some sanitary precautions have been dictated by enlightened self-interest. When my neighbor's house is afire, mine also is in danger. When his house is badly drained, the filth disease which attacks his child may quickly spread to the inmates of my home. By taking care of my neighbor's health I realize that I may preserve my own. But nobler forces are also at work. We feel increasingly that good health is one of the most important of civic and national assets. The public conscience is more sensitive than in the past; taught by science that much disease is preventable, we ask why it is not pre-

vented. Hence we see about us signs of much earnest sanitary effort, legislative, administrative and philanthropic. Very notable is the modern struggle against tuberculosis, which has been undertaken with so much energy both by public and private agencies, many Jewish bodies being prominent amongst the latter. Another fine effort is that taken in many lands to diminish the terrible scourge of infant mortality, the greater part of which is absolutely unnecessary. Supervision of the milk supply, the provision of suitable nourishment for child or nursing mother, the establishment of milk stations where babies are fed, where they are periodically examined, and where they receive medical treatment if necessary, the prohibition of women's employment for some time before and after child-birth, the diffusion of knowledge amongst nursing and expectant mothers,—all these expedients have been adopted with good results in one country or another and the rate of infant mortality, which long remained stationary, is now decreasing. Yet it is still far too high; English statisticians show us that "even an old man of 84 has a better chance of living another week than has the new born baby." Such success as has been attained must spur us forward to further efforts.

Of public health work, in general, the same may be said. It is still in its early stages and present achievements must be regarded as but the earnest of future results. The scientific methods of town-planning, which have been adopted in some German cities, must be made universal, so that existing insanitary areas

may be quickly remodelled and the growth of new ones prevented. The smoke nuisance must be abated in our manufacturing centres,—a reform already effected in Nottingham, where the nature of the staple local industry requires it, and possible everywhere else, provided that the public health be considered as worth paying for. And matters still more elementary must receive attention. Houses, built back to back without through ventilation, (such as abound in Leeds) must be demolished. No urban dwelling must be licensed for occupation, unless it be provided with a separate water-supply and a water-closet, automatically flushed. Bath-rooms must no longer be a luxury of the well-to-do; they will perhaps first come into general use in the schools as an adjunct of physical education, but soon they must be found in the home of every working man. Food products, exposed for sale, must be standardized. And, to carry our anticipations slightly further forward, the slaughter house, with its degrading concomitants, will be improved out of existence, so that the Jewish conception of holiness, as partly resting on a physical basis, may justify itself in a modernized and rational form. One other forecast of the future may be put forward with confidence. If any real progress is to be made, sanitary legislation will keep in step with the forward march of the sanitary conscience. Good health l 3 are valueless unless they are well administered and continuous good administration by a public authority is impossible, unless this sanitary conscience be rendered sensitive and well-informed. To promote this result is

a worthy task for the church universal. The City of God will guard the health of its people.

Is the present social order to continue in the beautiful City that is to be, or will the world be reorganized on a collectivist basis? I do not know and I will not attempt to prophesy. Indeed, it seems to me very foolish to talk about the events of the future, as though they were predestined. The future will be what it is made by mankind,—above all, by those sections of mankind, who, having brains and insight, use these gifts aright. Some of these leaders of men will be supporters of things as they more or less are; others will be preachers of social revolution. Victory may incline this way or that, but one thing is certain. The preservation of social peace can only be secured, if those at the head of affairs possess wisdom, good feeling and foresight. The established order of things holds the field and has behind it the tradition of inevitability, that counts for so much with the mass of men. Fundamental changes do not usually gain acceptance, except as a means of escape from intolerable corruptions. The opponents of socialism hold, therefore, a position of strategic advantage, provided they redress the people's serious grievances before the tidal wave of revolution sweeps away them and their cause. For it cannot be denied that many a measure of social reform is overdue not in one country but in all. Unrest, dangerous and well-grounded, exists today amongst the workers of the world. The unemployed are to be found in all large cities and so are the underpaid, the overworked, the prematurely superannuated.

Wages increase, but the cost of living increases more, so that the workman is worse off than he was in the nineties of the last century. Men are forced to work under dangerous conditions, because manufacturers fail to spend enough money on their machinery and plant. The profits do not permit it, they explain. It is no wonder that a growing feeling of exasperation is abroad, which is certainly not diminished by the spectacle, visible to every workman, of luxury in which it is very unlikely that he will ever participate. In so far as this exasperation is based upon mere envy, the workman may come to recognize its futility, whether through the force of reason or the logic of events. But, more often than not, he does well to be angry, for he is not receiving his due. Society must recognize, as Mr. Victor Hartshorn, the leader of the South Wales Miners, has well said, "that the claim of the worker to a sufficiency of food and clothing and a fuller life is just, and that it must be made the first charge upon the wealth produced. It must be a fixed and certain minimum standard of comfort"[1] If the present order of Society can do justice to the worker, it will justify its own existence; otherwise, its ultimate doom is sealed.

We look forward therefore to an age of social reconstruction although not necessarily to one of sensational changes. Such an age will come in peace, if all classes of society act with forbearance and good feeling. The poor man must not be impatient, because

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[1] *What the Worker Wants* (*The Daily Mail Enquiry,*) p. 99

ancient abuses are not remedied by a single stroke of the legislative pen. The rich man, on the other hand, who will be called upon to surrender some of his privileges and superfluities for the benefit of his poorer brethren must learn to do so with dignity and cheerfulness. The establishment of a minimum wage in all industries is one of labor's most reasonable demands. It will involve a loss of profit to many employers and perhaps put a few of them out of business. But submit they must to a measure, which is so just and so generally beneficial. Again, the requirements of social reform will necessitate successive additions to taxation, the burden of which must be imposed on the shoulders best able to bear it. As we form a wider conception of public duty we learn that social betterment is a corporate obligation, to which each of us must contribute a share, proportional to his ability. Many departments of social service will be organized on so large a scale, that they could never be covered by private philanthropy. The country, the State, the city must spare neither labor nor treasure to deal with the problems of unemployment, of pauperism, of educational imperfections, of disease, in a broad and statesmanlike spirit. Here again there is ample room for church and synagogue to exert their influence. They must impress their congregations with a sense of responsibility for the well-being of others and warn them against the besetting sin of selfishness. Such teaching must not be expressed in vague generalities; it must be applied to the living issues of today. We have too many preachers, whose practice if not their

theory, coincides with the tactful sentiment of D O'Phase, Esquire in the *Biglow Papers*:

I'm willin' a man should go tollable strong
Agin wrong in the abstract, fer thet kind o' wrong
Is ollers unpop'lar an' never gits pitied,
Because it's a crime no one never committed;
But he mustn't be hard on partickler sins,
Coz then he'll be kickin' the people's own shins.

Without turning his pulpit into a party platform, the preacher must deal fearlessly with the moral issues, that are involved in public questions, and he must press forward the claims of social justice. About ceremonies and abstract doctrines religious bodies may agree to differ; here is a grand field of work, to be shared in common.

But we are not to rely exclusively upon municipal and political effort for the regeneration of mankind. In the past, much more has been done for human betterment by voluntary beneficence than by the State. The history of Jewish charity confirms this conclusion, so far as it concerns our own people. In Christendom, charity has covered the globe with countless institutions of mercy; in past times, it not only relieved poverty and distress, but it founded schools and colleges, it built bridges and reclaimed waste land. It is true that the function of charity changes from time to time. Many services, formerly in the hands of charitable bodies have been transferred to public management in order that they may be discharged on a larger scale. The early history of the English Poor-law, after the suppression of the monasteries, illus-

trates the nature of the process; so does the development of English elementary education, which is no longer financed to any great extent by voluntary subscriptions. In every form of social work, the voluntary principle is most readily applicable to its earlier or experimental stages: when operations are widely extended, support from public funds may become essential and the demand for public control insistent. But we are far removed from the time, if such a time will ever come, when the voluntary principle in organized social service will be entirely superseded. As for social service—not organized, but spontaneously rendered in the hour of need—*that* will always continue, whatever political or economic changes there may be; its disappearance would make the world a cheerless waste.

Good philanthropic workers are hard to find for more reasons than one. Patience, efficiency and enthusiasm are all needed and the conjunction of these qualities is not very common. It is also to be lamented that men and women of admirable zeal for social reform often refuse to undertake charitable work or give it up after a trial. Sometimes their objections are directed against the incompetence of charitable agencies. They complain of societies, so swathed in red-tape, that an applicant for relief suffers long delay; and they complain of others, so lavish and unbusinesslike in their methods, that imposture is positively encouraged. But criticism, so destitute of constructiveness, does not take us far. The charges made against our charities, are indeed true in part. Social service is imper-

fect, because it is carried on by human instruments, themselves imperfect. To cut off the supply of good social workers will not mend matters; we want more such workers than ever before. An argument, which sounds more serious, is that which condemns charity as being essentially bad, because it renders the poor dependent upon the bounty of the rich and unwilling to fight for their rights. Better therefore, it is sometimes said, to throw our energies into political and municipal work,—to agitate for better legislation or to secure a better administration of the laws that already exist. But this argument also is fallacious. It is only too true that charity is sometimes put forward as a substitute for social justice; we must never tire of denying this false and mischievous claim. It does not follow, however, that charity is in itself injurious; on the contrary, it is indispensable. A better social order may be established in the future, but this very day the destitute must be fed, the sick must be tended, the sad must be comforted, those ready to fall must be saved from temptation. It is good to sow the seed that will yield a bountiful harvest hereafter, but the needs of the present must not be ignored.

Another reason for magnifying the office of the social worker must not be forgotten. Political agitation has one dangerous defect of its qualities. Almost inevitably it is conducted with bitterness. "Hate the sin, but not the sinner," said Beruria to her husband. This advice is habitually disregarded in the heat of controversy. The socialist does not confine himself to the denunciation of capitalism, but he is apt to draw a

picture, lurid, provocative and necessarily unfair, of the individual capitalist. Speakers and writers, who appeal to capitalist sympathies, are often equally unfair; some of the leading English and American newspapers are at their worst when they discuss labor questions. These unfair attacks, so harmful both in their direct effects and in their indirect influence, are delivered in the heat of controversy; but they would be impossible except for the mutual ignorance which divides class from class. The old patriarchal relationship between master and man is almost a thing of the past; the vast industrial concerns of today are joined with their workmen by the cash nexus only. Rich and poor reside far apart from each other in different sections of our cities; half the world has but a distorted idea of how the other half lives. And so arises class antagonism, which may grow into a menace to society and into a hindrance to social reconstruction on the best and surest foundations. The social worker should be a beneficent missionary, who bridges over the gulf that divides class from class. Valuable service of this nature has been rendered by social settlements, now numerous in large cities, where the democratic spirit and the sense of good fellowship are so pronounced.

Political and social reform are good. Blessed also is charity, especially remedial and preventive charity. But more is needed to build up the City of God. We must deal with the causes of evil, tracing it back to its stronghold, which is the heart of man. In the absence of moral regeneration, all progress is illusory.

Improved environment and improved character are both essential factors in human progress, for they act and react upon one another; but the greater of these is character. "Man will return to his idols and his cupidities in spite of all revolutions, until his nature is changed." (G. B. S.) If a man is to inherit the Kingdom, he must become superman—not Nietsche's superman, ruthless and selfish, but a superman who devotes his high power to the service of his fellows. True that perfection in the individual or in the social order is unattainable; as we approach the mountain-top, fresh vistas open before our gaze. Yet we must seek after perfection, "weary but pursuing."

We have now thought out some characteristics of the ideal city. It will be a place of honest labor and strong corporate life, where each of the citizens will prize his own home and will endeavor to bring light and happiness into the homes of others. But our picture is still imperfect, for our thoughts have not dwelt on the force, which can alone bring these things to pass. "Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman awaketh but in vain." Without faith in eternal righteousness, without the indwelling of the divine Spirit, we can do nothing. The danger against which we must fight is not the theoretical unbelief of today, but its practical ungodliness. As Dr. Fairbairn has well said, "The worst denial is not the denial of the name of God, but of the reign of God, and His reign is denied whenever men confess that He is, but live as if He had no kingdom, no law to govern the individual, to be incorporated or realized in the society or in the

State." The religion which saves is the religion which sanctifies all the actions and thoughts of man.

And for the Jew, religion spells Judaism. Throughout its long history, Judaism has guided Israel along the path of social righteousness and its potentialities remain unexhausted. This is an age of reconstruction for all historic religions and our own faith is not exempt from the same necessity. We must teach the masses of our people, upon whom the Judaism of yesterday has lost hold, that their salvation lies in Liberal Judaism, which is beginning to find itself today and which will become the Judaism of tomorrow.

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